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**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
 VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
 MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009, 6:00 P.M. 2009
 401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
 WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
 (415-554-6036)**

**GOVERNMENT
 DOCUMENTS DEPT**

DEC 30 2009

MEETING AGENDA HAPPY NEW YEAR

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1. CALL TO ORDER 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

7. REPORTS AND OTHER ACTION ITEMS

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

Review of Bylaws in coordination with the Administrative Code.

Re-opening of nominations for President, Vice President and Secretary for 2010.

Nominated at Dec. 7, 2009 meeting:

President; Veronika Cauley, James Guglielmoni & Robert Varni.

Vice President; Raymond Wong.

Secretary; Dara Wong.

Election of officers for 2010.

- A. PRESIDENT - Comm. Levin -**
- B. VICE PRESIDENT - Comm. Varni -**
- C. SECRETARY - Comm. Dara Wong -**
- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS - Comm. Noetzel -**
- E. EMPLOYMENT - Comm. Thompson -**
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE - Comm. Cauley -**
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS - Comm. Gibbs -**
- H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Comm. R. Wong -**
- I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. R. Wong - VFW report,
 Comm. Guglielmoni - DAV report, Comm. Caldera - American Legion report.**
- J. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING - Comm. Levin -**

8. OLD BUSINESS -

9. NEW BUSINESS -

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,160+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during the month of December.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE SUNSHINE ORDINANCE

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2009 MEETING
415-554-6036

President Levin called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. & led the Pledge.
Commissioners present: Regalado Baldonado, Jill Buck, John Caldera, Renie Champagne, George Gibbs, Chris Gruwell, James Guglielmoni, Wallace Levin, Stephen Noetzel, Michael Thompson, Robert Varni, Edwin Wilkerson, Dara Wong & Raymond Wong.
Commissioner not present: Veronka Cauley was excused. 14 commissioners present & 1 excused. Margaret Champagne & Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass were present.
Comm. Champagne moved approval of agenda, 2nd by Comm. Guglielmoni. Motion passed. Comm. Caldera moved approval of the corrected minutes of Dec. meeting, 2nd by Comm. Noetzel. Motion passed.

REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE CODE & COMMISSION BYLAWS - President Levin and Deputy City Attorney reviewed the Board of Supervisors Administrative Code and the commission Bylaws. Commissioners will receive material on the Code & Bylaws in Jan.

VICE PRESIDENTS REPORT - Comm. Varni reported that he was going to meet with officials at City College of San Francisco to discuss plans to form a veterans club at CCSF.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2010 - The results of the election for 2010 officers were, James Guglielmoni President, Raymond Wong Vice President and Dara Wong Secretary. Per the request of Comm. Champagne a motion to accept the results of the election was made by Comm. Guglielmoni, 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Motion passed to accept tally sheet.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA - Comm. Dara Wong & Raymond Wong reported on the Wreaths Across America national project to honor members of the Armed Forces that have been killed & those now serving in the military. Ceremony was held at the Presidio.

HONORS FOR RENIE CHAMPAGNE, RAYMOND WONG & DARA WONG - Comm. Levin, as Coordinator of the Memorial Day Ceremony presented awards to Master of Ceremonies Emeritus Renie Champagne, Master of Ceremonies Raymond Wong and Written Program Editor Dara Wong, for their dedicated service to the Mayor's Memorial Day Citizen's Committee 2009 and their work during the past decade.

HOMELESS VETERANS - Comm. Noetzel reported that he was working on a plan to help the Census Bureau better identify homeless veterans.

EMPLOYMENT - Comm. Thompson reported that the 20th Annual Veterans Employment Committee Job Fair will be held at Fort Mason, on May 12, 2010. The invitations are out.

LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Comm. Raymond Wong reported that the 111th Congress approved funding for VA Health Care in the amount of 47.5 billion for 2010 and 48.2 billion for 2011. The VA is still having problems getting veterans claims approved.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. Guglielmoni reported that the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), is the number one veterans group in providing services to disabled veterans and in filing veterans claims. During last December the DAV passed out 500 pocket calendars to the veterans at Fort Miley Hospital. Comm. Caldera reported that American Legion Bob Basker Post 315 visited the veterans at Fort Miley on Dec. 23rd. They passed out over a hundred Holiday cards and music CD's.

FAREWELL TO COMMISSIONER JILL BUCK - President Levin thanked Jill Buck for her service to the commission and to veterans. Her term will end on Jan. 31, 2010 and she will not continue to serve on the commission. She told the Commissioners that it was an honor serving with them and she wished everyone the best in the future.

WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING - Comm. Levin reported that under the sound and stable leadership of Roger Dong & Nelson Lum, the American Legion War Memorial Commission is now on the right track and that they are doing everything they can to get things running in a democratic manner.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS FOR 2010 - Comm. Champagne installed the new commission officers; President James Guglielmoni, Vice President Raymond Wong and Secretary Dara Wong.

FIRST SAN FRANCISCAN KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN - Comm. Levin reported that on December 25, 2009, Staff Sgt. David H. Gutierrez was killed by an IED in Afghanistan and he became the first San Franciscan killed in Afghanistan. He was stationed at Kandahar Air Field, had served a tour in Iraq and was at the end of his tour in Afghanistan. His wife and 3 sons were living at Fort Lewis, Washington, which was the home base for his unit. Many of his relatives live in Santa Clara County. It was reported on TV that his burial was to be in Gilroy, because his daughter had her burial there. Mayor Gavin Newsom placed San Francisco's flags at half staff in his honor and the Mayor sent a letter of condolence to his wife.

HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,160+ Americans killed in Iraq/Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, the veterans who died because of suicide during the month of December, former Veterans Affairs Commissioners Bud Wilson, Corky Reed, Fred Gomez and the first San Franciscan killed in Afghanistan Staff Sgt. David H. Gutierrez.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)

MEETING AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS
7. REPORTS AND OTHER ACTION ITEMS

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

Review of Board of Supervisors Administrative Code forming the comm. (1 & 1B)

Review of Board of Supervisors Administrative Code commission changes. (2 to 5)

Review of Veterans Affairs Commission original Bylaws. (6)

Review of new changes to the Veterans Affairs Commission Bylaws. (7)

A. PRESIDENT - Comm. Guglielmoni

B. VICE PRESIDENT - Comm. Raymond Wong

C. SECRETARY - Comm. Dara Wong

D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS - Comm. Levin

E. EMPLOYMENT - Comm. Thompson - Comm. Wilkerson

F. HEALTH & WELFARE - Comm. Cauley - Comm. Varni - Comm. Noetzel

G. HOMELESS VETERANS - Comm. Gibbs - Comm. Noetzel

H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Comm. R. Wong

I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. R. Wong - VFW report,

Comm. Guglielmoni - DAV report, Comm. Caldera - American Legion report.

J. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING - Comm. Levin

8. OLD BUSINESS -

9. NEW BUSINESS -

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,200+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during the month of January.

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**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of February 1st, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

President Guglielmoni called the meeting to order at 6:16PM, a quorum being present. President Guglielmoni led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL

	present	absent	excused
James Guglielmoni	x		
Regalado Baldonado	x		
John Caldera	x		
Veronika Cauley			x
Renie Champagne			x
George Gibbs	x		
Chris Gruwell	x		
Wallace Levin	x		
Stephen Noetzel	x		
Michael Thompson	x		
Robert Varni	x		
Edwin Wilkerson	x		
Raymond Wong	x		
Dara Wong	x		

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Twelve (12) commissioners present, two (2) commissioners excused, eight (7) commissioners required for quorum.

Acceptance for approval of January 4th, 2010 minutes. Motion by Commissioner D. Wong, 2nd by Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Noetzel voiced abstention.

Acceptance for approval of February 1st, 2010 agenda. Motion by Commissioner Levin, 2nd by Commissioner Baldonado. Commissioner Noetzel voiced abstention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

AL comrade, Anthony Affidi offered his remarks toward the VFW. The Veterans of Foreign Wars <http://www.vfw.org> was formed and organized in **September 29th, 1899**, and the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars <http://www.ladiesauxvfw.org> was formed and organized on **September 14th, 1914**, long before the AL was organized.

The following committee reports were submitted:

PAST PRESIDENT'S LEVIN REPORT

For the record, the Board of Supervisors Administrative Code (1, 1B, 2, 3, 4, 5), the Veterans Affairs Commission original bylaws (6), changes to Veterans Affairs Commission bylaws (7), hardcopies were USPS delivered daily between January 16-31, 2010 for the commission's review. At November 2nd, 2009 meeting, the suggested housekeeping changes to the commission's bylaws were presented, my question: what are the powers and duties of the commission? As mention in section 5.104 "submit recommendations", "make recommendations". Commission Levin's good intentions, are to update the bylaws, with no big changes, the bylaws cannot conflict with the Administrative code. By e-mail, Deputy City Attorney Snodgrass explained the Brown Act requirements and prohibitions. Motion by Commissioner Levin to accept the changes to Veterans Affairs Commission bylaws (7). President Guglielmoni, Commissioner(s) Caldera, Gibbs, Gruwell, Levin, Varni, R. Wong offered their comments, cannot move forward with Deputy City Attorney Snodgrass guidance. Eleven (11) commission members accepting changes, one (1) commission member opposed, no abstention.

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of February 1st, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Guglielmoni was reappointed DAV Department Chief of State, also mentioned the plaintiff advantage hospital model will be replicated at the

California Veterans Home
10900 Telephone Road
Ventura, CA 93004-1870

Commissioner Caldera reported 9 commissioners for quorum of 17 commission members under new; 8 commissioners for quorum of 15 commission members under old.

President Guglielmoni, Commissioner Caldera, Gibbs, Noetzel offered their comments on the standing committees (ad hoc, short-term). President Guglielmoni suggested e-mail your interests, part of committee, part of agenda.

Commissioner R. Wong reported there are thousands and thousands of stolen valor cases being FBI investigated, i.e., Gil Lucas, Madera, Fresno county

HEALTH & WELFARE

Commissioner Varni reported the organization of a City College of San Francisco veterans club, the facility (administrative office, interview rooms, CSVO office, private lounge area) will be open 2010 fall semester, the club president has been selected. In the quest to seek relevance for the commission, Commissioner Varni has agreed to focus the next three weekly television interviews on the Veterans Affairs Commission: 1st interview would feature the President Guglielmoni discussing future plans; 2nd interview would feature Past President Levin, commission's past accomplishments; 3rd interview would feature various commission members, their participation in future plans.

President Guglielmoni, Commissioner(s) Gibbs, Noetzel offered their comments. Commissioner Noetzel suggestion of registry of birth defects, poisoning, veterans court, working with William Leon (regional director, Seattle region, census bureau, March 31, 2010)

WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioner Levin reported John Ferret re-doing ALWMC financials, five (5) active AL posts, Jaime Lopez available 1:00-5:00PM room 101

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS

President Guglielmoni reported on DAV national/departments activities.

Commissioner R. Wong reported on VFW 14th district Voice of Democracy awards ceremony.

Commissioner Levin reported dwindling participation, AL department, mayor's proclamation, ALWMC activities, his name mentioned in AL department four chaplains ceremony at Saint Mary's Cathedral.

Commissioner Thompson reported on February 23, 2010 event at the Basque center, South San Francisco, 400 persons, \$ 27.00 per person.

Commissioner Caldera reported his television interview discussing "don't ask, don't tell", Supervisor Mirkarimi's proclamation.

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of February 1st, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT

Commissioner Thompson reported 100 invitations sent, for the 20th annual VEC/EDD job fair, Fort Mason Center space, May 12, 2010 event, 2,600 invitations to be sent to participate, \$ 400.00 per table, before April 30, 2010 deadline; \$ 450.00 per table, after April 30, 2010

HOMELESS VETERANS

Project Homeless Connect 33 will be held on Wednesday, February 24 2010, at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium

LEGISLATION EVALUATION

Commissioner R. Wong reported on the introduction:

- AB 498 Vehicles: special interest license plates, sponsored by Mary Hayashi (Hayward); supporting ex-POWs' option to purchase veterans' license plate instead, without fees
- AB 1088 Taxpayer contributions: California Veterans Fund, sponsored by Nathan Fletcher (San Diego)

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Levin reported being interview SFGTV channel 29 Battle of the Bulge, December 12, 2009

Commissioner R. Wong reported United States Postal Service first day of issue ceremony in California State Capitol, Sacramento of distinguished sailors who served with bravery and distinction during the 20th century: William S. Sims, Arleigh A. Burke, John McCloy, Doris Miller

Commissioner Noetzel expresses his displeasure of Brown Act violations: 72 hours notice agenda item posted, public meeting, open to public.

Commissioner R. Wong reported Robert Kelley died 38.5 years ago in 1972, his family request reimbursement for disinterment, reburial, buried in paupers' gravesite, his case deferred to CVSO, mayor's office. President Guglielmoni, Commissioner(s) Gibbs, Noetzel offered their comments.

Commissioner Levin reported on Presidio Memorial Day ceremony, work-in-progress.

HONORS REPORT and ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned in memory of the 5,378 Americans killed in Iraq (4,369) and Afghanistan (1,009), the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, the veterans that died because of suicide during the month of January, John Alfred Smith (San Diego county), Isaac Hudson killed November 11, 2009, columnist Herb Caan.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24PM

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
1390 MARKET STREET, 7TH FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102
(415-554-6036)

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#1
3/1/10
cancelled
THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

MONDAY

MARCH 1, 2010

MEETING

HAS BEEN

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CANCELLED

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- 7. REPORTS AND OTHER ACTION ITEMS**

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

**Open and public vote for 2010 Commission Officers,
President, Vice President and Secretary,
because of a formal Brown Act complaint made by Commissioner Stephen Noetzel.
Nominated for President; Veronika Cauley, Jim Guglielmoni, and Robert Varni.
Nominated for Vice President; Raymond Wong.
Nominated for Secretary; Dara Wong.**

Consideration and possible adoption of commission by laws.

- A. PRESIDENT -**
- B. VICE PRESIDENT -**
- C. SECRETARY -**
- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -**
- E. EMPLOYMENT -**
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE -**
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS -**
- H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION -**
- I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS -**
- J. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING -**

- 8. OLD BUSINESS -**
- 9. NEW BUSINESS -**
- 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -**
- 11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,180+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during the months of February and March.**

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**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of April 5th, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

President Guglielmoni asked Commissioner Levin to call the meeting to order at 6:06PM, a quorum being present. Commissioner Levin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL				ELECTION OF OFFICERS					
	present	absent	excused	Cauley	Guglielmoni	Varni	Levin	R.Wong	D.Wong
James Guglielmoni	x				x			x	x
Regalado Baldonado	x				x			x	
John Caldera	x				x			x	x
Veronika Cauley			x						
Renie Champagne	x						x	x	x
George Gibbs	x				x			x	x
Chris Gruwell	x				x			x	x
Wallace Levin	x				x			x	x
Stephen Noetzel	x				x			x	x
Michael Thompson	x				x			x	x
Robert Varni	x						x	x	x
Edwin Wilkerson	x					x		x	x
Raymond Wong	x				x			x	x
Dara Wong	x				x			x	x

Thirteen (13) commissioners present, one (1) commissioner excused, eight (8) commissioners required for quorum. Margaret Champagne, Wayne Snodgrass (Deputy City Attorney) were present.

Commissioner Caldera motion to postpone acceptance of February 1st, 2010 minutes, April 5th, 2010 agenda, until election of officers completed.

Commissioner Noetzel's point of order to set aside January 4th, 2010 election, because of Brown Act. Re-election of officers ensued, before other commission's business.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Past President Levin asked Margaret Champagne and Wayne Snodgrass to be ballot tabulators, results as follows:

President	James Guglielmoni	10 votes
	Veronika Cauley	0 votes
	Robert Varni	1 votes
write-in votes	Wallace Levin	2 votes
Vice President	Raymond Wong	12 votes
Secretary	Dara Wong	12 votes

Acceptance for approval of April 5th, 2010 election results. Motion by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner D.Wong, motion passed, Wayne Snodgrass reported election results will be made available.

EDIFICATION

Veterans Affairs Commission was created in 1984

The Brown Act is California's law governing the conduct of meetings of "legislative bodies." (created 2004, Government Code 54950 et. seq.) Included within the definition of "legislative body" is a "commission, committee, board, or other body of a local agency, whether permanent, or temporary, decision-making or advisory, created by charter, ordinance, resolution, or formal action of a legislative body...(Government Code 54952(b)).

The Sunshine Ordinance is the City's law governing the conduct of "policy bodies"...is any board, commission, committee, or other body created by ordinance or resolution of the Board of Supervisors...(San Francisco Administrative Code 67.3(d)(4)).

Acceptance for approval of April 5th, 2010 agenda. Motion by Commissioner Guglielmoni, 2nd by Commissioner Wilkerson, motion passed.

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
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(415) 554-6036**

Acceptance for approval of February 1st, 2010 minutes. Motion by Commissioner Guglielmoni, 2nd by President Guglielmoni, Commissioner(s) Noetzel/Varni voted to abstain. Commissioner Noetzel passed out his written revision of February 1st, 2010 minutes, much discussion ensued. Re-acceptance for approval of secretary's February 1st, 2010 minutes. Motion by Commissioner Gruwell, 2nd by Commissioner Champagne. Commissioner Gibbs mentioned this is NOT freshman English class, motion passed.

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following committee reports were submitted:

PAST PRESIDENT'S LEVIN BYLAWS REPORT

Deputy City Attorney Snodgrass, in detail, went over various documents, circulated by Commissioner Levin. Commissioner Levin went over the needed housekeeping changes for the commission bylaws: residency rules, deletes category, attendance

Commissioner Caldera commends Commissioner Levin's efforts to cleanup the commission's bylaws, motion for acceptance for approval of numerous bylaws #1 - #5 changes. Motion by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner Levin. Commissioner Noetzel's alternative motion to additional changes to bylaws #6 - #9, was tabled.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Guglielmoni reported on DAV national/departments activities, mentioned Commissioner(s) Wong were involved in similar VFW national/departments activities, was NOT available for a March 1st, 2010 meeting, due to Brown Act concerns. Past President Levin took upon himself to cancelled March meeting, could not rescheduled, due to unavailability of commission member.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Commissioner R.Wong raised concerns that the commission could have corrected and/or resolve disagreements without going to the state legislative analyst office, Board of Supervisors, etc. Board of Supervisors created the Veterans Affairs Commission, and can be dissolve.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Commissioner D.Wong reported that Commissioner(s) Gibbs, R.Wong, D.Wong attended the Sheriff's Department COVER February 25, 2010 meeting, 48 male veterans-defendants county jail POD, one (1) female veteran-defendant; program to assist incarcerated veterans.

HEALTH & WELFARE

Commissioner Noetzel suggested protocol to identify veterans among homeless to be worked with after 2010 census.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS

Commissioner Thompson reported on February 23, 2010 luncheon, Basque cultural center, South San Francisco, attended by returning Iraq/ Afghanistan veterans.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT

Commissioner Thompson reported 2,400 Invitations sent, for the 20th annual VEC/EDD job fair, Fort Mason conference center, May 12, 2010 event, \$ 400.00 per table, before April 30, 2010 deadline; \$ 450.00 per table, after April 30, 2010, seven (7) employers sent money in to participate; asked State Senator Leland Yee, Ph.D. (D-8th District), and Assemblywoman Fiona Ma (D-12th District) to support

HOMELESS VETERANS

Commissioner Gibbs reported East Bay Stand Down 2010 planning April 13th, 2010 meeting, Alameda county fairgrounds, event to be held August 5-8, 2010. Project Homeless Connect 34 will be held on Wednesday, June 11, 2010, Bayview Hunters Point, both events accepting volunteers. President Guglielmoni reported Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki (U.S. Army General Retired) driving van in Sacramento, picking up homeless, good rapport, to commit \$ 4.1 billion; 5-years plan to eliminate homelessness, transitional services.

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of April 5th, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

LEGISLATION EVALUATION

Commissioner R. Wong reported on the introduction:

- AB 1703 State Nursing Assumption Program of Loans for Education: veterans homes (Stephen Knight, Lancaster)
 - AB 1757 Veterans cemetery (William Monning, Santa Cruz)
 - AB 1829 Military decorations: fraud (Paul Cook, Yucaipa)
 - AB 2309 Veterans' Home of California (Nathan Fletcher, San Diego)
 - AB 1056 Income taxes: hiring credit: veterans (Jeff Denham, Merced)
- 111th Congress (1st session) VFW-support legislative accomplishments that became public law
- Public Law 111-81 Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009
 - Public Law 111-82 Authorize Major Medical Facility Leases for FY2010
 - Public Law 111-97 Military Spouses Residency Relief Act
 - Public Law 111-84 FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Champagne reported he has been 48 years as parade director (Italian Heritage, Saint Patrick's, veterans)

Commissioner Levin reported that the planning May 31st, 2010 Presidio Memorial Day ceremony on track.

Commissioner Noetzel requested copies of annual report, letters to Board of Supervisors be made available to him, from past commission president.

NEW BUSINESS

President Guglielmoni is bringing a 32-foot fishing boat, seeking a slip to be donated, in a public harbor, for fishing derby, by Monterey Bay veterans rehabilitation center, \$ 5,000.00 funds to support fuel had been donated, \$ 7,000.00 funds to support activities, needs the commission to support letter.

Commissioner Baldonado's ADO/AGO-55 is not DD-214, notarized Filipino discharged papers, various VSOs cannot assist him. Commissioner Levin referred him to a Contra Costa county attorney. Commissioner Gruwell mentioned the commission has no jurisdiction over AL, VFW bylaws or eligibility.

Commissioner Noetzel questioned why nine (9) seated commissioners' expiration January 31, 2011. President Guglielmoni asked Commissioner Gruwell, who advised the commission, it is the Board of Supervisors pejorative, to appoint on Board of Supervisors calendar. Commissioner Levin mentioned Board of Supervisors rules committee clerk changes every other year. Commissioner Gruwell recommended taking no action pertaining to this issue.

HONORS REPORT and ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned In memory of the 5,421 Americans killed in Iraq (4,380) and Afghanistan (1,041), the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, the veterans that died because of suicide during the month of February, March.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44PM

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, MAY 3, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

7. REPORTS

- A. PRESIDENT -**
- B. VICE PRESIDENT -**
- C. SECRETARY -**
- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -**
- E. EMPLOYMENT -**
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE -**
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS -**
- H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION -**
- I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS -**
- J. VETERANS PROJECTS**
- K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING -**

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- 8. OLD BUSINESS -**
- 9. NEW BUSINESS – Discussion and possible action in support of the Planning Commissions approval of a plan to convert 150 Otis St. into permanent living space for homeless veterans.**
- 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -**
- 11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,200+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in April.**

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**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2010 MEETING
415-554-6036**

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President Guglielmoni called the meeting to order a 6:05 P.M. & led the Pledge.
Commissioners present: Regalado Baldonado, John Caldera, Veronika Cauley, Renie Champagne, George Gibbs, Chris Gruwell, James Guglielmoni, Wallace Levin, Stephen Noetzel, Michael Thompson, Robert Varni, Edwin Wilkerson, Dara Wong and Raymond Wong. Commissioner Jill Buck was not present and was excused. Margaret Champagne, Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass and Anthony Alfidi were also present. 14 commissioners present, 1 excused and 2 not appointed. Comm. Cauley moved approval of agenda, 2nd by Comm. Thompson. Motion passed. Comm. Noetzel and Baldonado had corrections for the minutes of the April meeting and approval was tabled.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Comm. Guglielmoni reported that there had been problems in one southern California City, pertaining to the tagging of vehicles with DAV license plates.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Comm. Raymond Wong reported that he attended the California State Commanders Veterans Counsel meeting in Sacramento. They are attempting to obtain enough requests for a new Gold Star family license plate and that they need additional requests to reach the needed number to produce the plate.

SECRETARY'S REPORT - Comm. Dara Wong reported that she and Raymond Wong presented VFW JROTC & ROTC Awards at various local schools & colleges.

HEALTH AND WELFARE - Comm. Noetzel is gathering information on the health effects of depleted uranium ammunition on our Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. Levin reported that at the request of Raymond Wong, he represented the VFW at the successful University of San Francisco ROTC Cadet Awards Ceremony.

Comm. Caldera, Commander of American Legion Post 315, reported many positive changes have occurred in the operation of the American Legion War Memorial Commission & District 8. His post will hold a Veterans Building Luau on July 4th.

COMMISSION GOAL AND PLANS - Per Comm. Noetzel's request, Comm. Levin presented copies of the letter sent to the Presidio Trust thanking them for their National Cemetery Overlook and the Japanese American Veterans exhibit. A letter sent to the Board of Supervisors thanking them for their ceremony honoring veterans and conveying our concern about the Veterans Affairs Commission legislation that they passed without our knowledge. A letter that Comm. Wong sent to Assemblywoman Mary Salas thanking her for her support to veterans. And copies of the Commission's 2009 Report were made available.

Comm. Varni requested an explanation of the relationship between what we do individually and what the commission does. President Guglielmoni stated that as commissioners everything we do for veterans, we do also as commissioners and that it is part of what the commission is all about, since we are only an advisory commission. That we now have on our agenda, VETERANS PROJECTS to cover this area.

EMPLOYMENT - Comm. Thompson reported that the 20th Job Fair would be held at Fort Mason on May 12. Nineteen employers will be on hand with job opportunities. They would like to have the 2011 Job Fair at the Veterans Building.

HOMELESS VETERANS - Comm. Gibbs reported that the August East Bay Stand Down is moving along and that they are attempting to help those that have no other aid available. Comm. Cauley reported that the next San Francisco June Homeless Connect would be held in the Bayview Hunters Point area.

VETERANS PROJECTS - Comm. Varni reported that there are a number of veteran events that take place every month and that the commission should do more to help promote them. That these events should be placed on the VAC website. President Guglielmoni reported that we will make a better effort to promote veteran events on our website and that our Bylaw's clearly states that the secretary is our Webmaster, under the direction of the President. If anyone has veteran events that they want placed on the website, they should contact the President.

Comm. Levin reported on the War Memorial Board of Trustees Veteran's Building Memorial Court project, under the leadership of Trustee Major General Michael Myatt. The American Legion War Memorial Commission Chairman, Roger Dong is also Chairman of this projects Working Committee.

Comm. Levin reviewed the organizational planning for the Presidio Memorial Day Ceremony. The main theme of the event is the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the start of the Korean War.

NEW BUSINESS - Comm. Gibbs brought up the subject of free street vending licenses for veterans and that he will be checking into this issue.

Comm. Levin made a motion 2nd by Comm. Caldera to support the Planning Commissions approval of the plan to convert 150 Otis Street into permanent housing for homeless veterans and we urge the Board of Supervisors to move this very important project forward. Motion passed.

HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT - in memory of the 5,300+ Americans killed in Iraq & Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, and the veterans that died because of suicide during the months of March and April.

Dara Wong, Commission Secretary

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- 7. REPORTS**

- A. PRESIDENT -**
- B. VICE PRESIDENT -**
- C. SECRETARY -**
- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -**
- E. EMPLOYMENT -**
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE -**
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS -**
- H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION -**
- I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS -**
- J. VETERANS PROJECTS -**
- K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING -**

- 8. OLD BUSINESS -**

- 9. NEW BUSINESS - Discussion and possible action:**

Veterans Employment Committee EDD 2011 Job Fair at the War Memorial Veterans Building.

Future Veterans Affairs Commission space requirements in the War Memorial Veterans Building.

War Memorial Board of Trustees Memorial Court Veterans Memorial.

- 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -**

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,400+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in May.

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**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF JUNE 7, 2010 MEETING
415-554-6036**

Vice President Raymond Wong called the meeting to order a 6:20 P.M. & led the Pledge. Commissioners present: Regalado Baldonado, John Caldera, Renie Champagne, George Gibbs, Wallace Levin, Stephen Noetzel, Edwin Wilkerson, Dara Wong and Raymond Wong. Commissioners Jill Buck, James Guglielmoni, Veronika Cauley, Chris Gruwell, Michael Thompson and Robert Varni were not present and were excused. Margaret Champagne and Anthony Alffidi were also present. 9 commissioners present, 6 excused and 2 not appointed.

Comm. Noetzel moved approval of agenda, 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Motion passed.

Because the minutes of the May meeting had not been completed, Comm. Caldera made a motion to table approval until the next meeting of the commission. Second by Comm. Noetzel. Motion passed. Comm. Levin inquired if the April minutes had been corrected for approval. They were not ready for approval and a motion was made by Comm. Noetzel to table the April minutes until the next commission meeting. Second by Comm. Levin. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS Anthony Alffidi reported that he has made application for appointment to the Veterans Affairs Commission (VAC). He will be called back to active duty, but he will be stationed in the Bay Area and he will continue to live in San Francisco.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Comm. Raymond Wong reported that the Presidio Memorial Day Ceremony went very well and attendance surpassed previous years and he thanked all of the commissioners that attended the event.

SECRETARY'S REPORT - Comm. Dara Wong reported on other Memorial Weekend activities including Boy Scout's placement of flags on all of the grave markers at the National Cemeteries, Marines Memorial Observance, USS Pompanito ceremony and the USS San Francisco Monument ceremony at Lands End.

COMMISSION GOALS AND PLANS - Future VAC space requirements in the War Memorial Veterans Building. Comm. Levin reviewed the time line of the War Memorial Trustees Retrofit Plan for the Veterans Building. The building closing date is set for Jan. 1, 2013 and the return date is 2016. The commission has had a desk in room 123 for 26 years. That the VAC should request future use of an office, storage space and a meeting room. Since these requests must be presented prior to the next meeting, Comm. Levin made a motion that our future needs in the Veterans Building be forwarded to the American Legion War Memorial Commission. Second by Comm. Wilkerson. Motion passed.

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EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – Comm. Dara Wong reported that there were 292 veteran job seekers and 20 employers in attendance at the 20th Annual Veterans Employment Committee EDD Job Fair. Because they would like to have the 2011 Job Fair at the Veterans Building, Comm. Levin made a motion that the 2011 Job Fair be held at the Veterans Building. Second by Comm. Gibbs. Motion passed.

HOMELESS VETERANS – Comm. Gibbs reported on the Veterans East Bay Stand Down and COVEN program regarding a dedicated jail area to house inmates that are veterans. Comm. Noetzel reported on the June 3rd announcement by HUD and the VA, that they are going to prioritize 8000 HUD public housing vouchers for homeless veterans.

LEGISLATION EVALUATION – Comm. Raymond Wong submitted copies of a review of current state and federal bills that would effect veterans.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS – Comm. Caldera submitted a letter pertaining to accusations that the prior leadership of the American Legion District 8 and the American Legion War Memorial Commission, had not handled these organizations finances in a proper manner. Since the American Legion Department of California was conducting an investigation into this matter, Comm. Levin suggested that Comm. Caldera consult with Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass, as to what authority and action that the VAC might take pertaining to this matter.

VETERANS PROJECTS – Comm. Levin reported on the War Memorial Board of Trustees Memorial Court Veterans Memorial project. This is a 3 year project, with a goal of raising two and half million dollars. Trustee J. Michael Myatt is moving the project forward and he is the Chairman of the Trustees Veterans Committee and of this project. American Legion War Memorial Commission Chairman Roger Dong is Chairman of the project's Working Committee. That the VAC should support this important project to honor veterans.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Comm. Caldera invited everyone to attend American Legion Post 315's July 4th Luau at the Veterans Building, room 207.

HONORS REPORT AND ADJOURNMENT – In memory of the 5,400+ Americans killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during May.

Dara Wong, Commission Secretary

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

THE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION TAKES IT'S SUMMER
RECESS IN JULY AND NO MEETING IS HELD.

NEXT MEETING OF THE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 2, 2010, 6:00 P.M., AT THE
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING,
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104.

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**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL, MAY & JUNE MEETINGS**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- 7. REPORTS**

A. PRESIDENT -

B. VICE PRESIDENT -

C. SECRETARY -

D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -

E. EMPLOYMENT -

F. HEALTH & WELFARE -

G. HOMELESS VETERANS -

H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION -

**I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS – Comm. Caldera's accusations
against the prior leadership of American Legion District 8 and the War
Memorial Veterans Commission. Discussion and possible action.**

**J. VETERANS PROJECTS – War Memorial Board of Trustees
Memorial Court Veterans Monument Project. Discussion & possible action.**

**K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING – Future Veterans
Affairs Commission space requirements in the Veterans Building. Discussion
and possible action.**

8. OLD BUSINESS -

9. NEW BUSINESS -

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

**11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,450+
Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San
Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in June.**

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August 2, 2010

Veterans' Affairs Commission - August 2, 2010

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF AUGUST 2, 2010 MEETING
415-554-6036

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Vice President Raymond Wong called the meeting to order at 6:10 P.M. & led the Pledge.

Commissioners present: Regalado Baldonado, John Caldera, Renie Champagne, George Gibbs, Wallace Levin, Stephen Noetzel, Michael Thompson, Robert Vami, Edwin Wilkerson, Dara Wong, and Raymond Wong. Commissioners Jill Buck, Veronika Cauley, Chris Gruwell and James Guglielmoni, were not present and were excused.

Also present were Margaret Champagne, Anthony Alfidi, Michael Williams, Jeff Thompson and James Knudstrup.
11 commissioners present, 4 excused and 2 not appointed.

Comm. Noetzel moved approval of agenda as corrected, 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Motion passed.

Comm. Noetzel moved approval of the June minutes, with Comm. Caldera's correction of changing the wording under National Veterans Groups to read, "Commission Caldera submitted a letter pertaining to formal charges". Second by Comm. Wilkerson. Motion passed.

Comm. Caldera moved approval of the May minutes, second by Comm. Thompson. Passed.

Comm. Noetzel moved approval of the April minutes, second by Comm. Thompson. Passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Michael Williams, who is working on a new program to bring Veterans Service Organizations (VSO's), into the Veterans Building after the Veterans Building retrofit. He is doing this for the American Legion War Memorial Commission. The plan is to bring groups into the building like the Vets Center, County Veterans Service Office, etc. All this to help the returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans. The plan must be presented to the War Memorial Trustees on Sept. 9th. The goal is to move them into the area where the present veterans organizations offices are located. This is the same area that the Arts Commission wants to put in an Art Gallery.

Jeff Thompson and James Knudstrup from the new Veterans Club at City College of San Francisco, reported that they have been working on their new Veterans Resource Center. They are getting it ready for the opening of the new semester. One room will be a meeting place for veterans and the other room will be for offices, where veterans can get services. The Veterans Administration will be conducting office hours once a week and they have received a lot of support. They have a dozen active members presently. The veteran population in Spring 2008 was 75, Spring 2009 was 150 and Spring 2010 they will have over 500. This increase is because of the new G.I. bill.

Anthony Alfidi reported that he has made application for appointment to the Veterans Affairs Commission (VAC). He will appear before the Rules Committee on August 5th for appointment.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Comm. Raymond Wong reported that he and Dara will attend the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention and that they spent many hours going through the material in Veterans Building room 205, selecting VFW items, that the prior American Legion War Memorial Commission leadership had removed from lockers and had dumped altogether in a big pile on the floor. On Aug. 3 the building will collect all items to be discarded.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – Comm. Thompson reported that there were 292 veteran job seekers and 20 employers in attendance at the 20th Annual Veterans Employment Committee EDD Job Fair at Fort Mason. The next Veterans Employment Committee meeting would be held on Aug. 12, at 401 3rd St.

HOMELESS VETERANS – Comm. Gibbs reported on the plans for the Veterans East Bay Stand Down, on Aug. 5 to 8. Four bus loads of San Francisco homeless veterans will be brought to the Stand Down.

LEGISLATION EVALUATION – Comm. Raymond Wong submitted copies for review of current state and federal bills that would affect veterans. The State Legislature is in recess.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS – Comm. Caldera reported that he had met with Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass pertaining to his formal charges against the prior leadership of the American Legion District 8 and the American Legion War Memorial Commission, that they had not handled the group's finances in a proper manner. Since Wayne Snodgrass was not present he requested that this matter be tabled until the next meeting.

VETERANS PROJECTS – Comm. Levin reported on the War Memorial Board of Trustees Memorial Court Veterans Memorial project. This is a 3 year project, with a goal of raising two and half million dollars. Comm. Noetzel drafted three resolutions in support of this project. Comm. Levin reported that he had been appointed by General Myatt to the Working Committee, thus there would be no need for the second or third resolutions. He thanked Comm. Noetzel for his work in putting the three resolutions together and that he especially appreciated the third resolution. The first resolution will be edited by Comm. Noetzel for approval at the next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Comm. Gibbs asked what the commission policy is on how long people can speak during Public Comments.

HONORS REPORT AND ADJOURNMENT – In memory of the 5,450+ Americans killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during June and July.

Dara Wong, Commission Secretary

September 13, 2010

Veterans' Affairs Commission - September 13, 2010

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)

MEETING AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS - Length of time given to speakers. Discussion and possible action.
7. REPORTS
 - A. PRESIDENT -
 - B. VICE PRESIDENT -
 - C. SECRETARY -
 - D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS - Using the Veterans Building as the Veterans Affairs Commission address. Discussion and possible action.
 - E. EMPLOYMENT -
 - F. HEALTH & WELFARE -
 - G. HOMELESS VETERANS -
 - H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - 9th United States Circuit Court of Appeals decision against the Stolen Valor Act. Discussion and possible action.
 - I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. Caldera's formal charges against the prior leadership of American Legion District 8 and the War Memorial Veterans Commission. Discussion and possible action.
 - J. VETERANS PROJECTS - Board of Trustees Memorial Court Veterans Monument & Project Sign - Discussion & possible action.
 - K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING - American Legion War Memorial Commissions Veterans Service Organizations Veteran's Building Project. Discussion and possible action.
8. OLD BUSINESS -
9. NEW BUSINESS -
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -
11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,500+ Americans killed in Iraq / Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in August.

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2010 MEETING
415-554-6036

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President James Guglielmoni called the meeting to order a 6:10 P.M. & led the Pledge.

Commissioners present: Anthony Alfidi, John Caldera, Renie Champagne, Chris Gruwell, James Guglielmoni, Wallace Levin, Michael Thompson, Edwin Wilkerson, Dara Wong, and Raymond Wong. Commissioners Regalado Baldonado, Jill Buck, Veronika Cauley, George Gibbs, Stephen Noetzel and Robert Varni were excused.

Also present were Margaret Champagne, Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass, Marco Marcella, Jeremy Laukhuf and Andrew Benton.

10 commissioners present, 6 excused and 1 not appointed.

Comm. Champagne moved approval of agenda, 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Motion passed.

Comm. Caldera moved approval of August minutes, 2nd by Comm. Thompson. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - Marco Marchella, a Navy veteran who is interested in veterans affairs, like Fleet Week and the USS Iowa. He commended the commission for our support to these kind of events and projects. Roger Dong, Chairman of the American Legion War Memorial Commission. He reported on their plan to bring veterans service organizations into the Veterans Building, to help and give needed services to our returning war veterans. He reported that the War Memorial Trustees approved a plan presented by the Art Commission, to put an art gallery in the area where the veterans have had offices on the first floor for 78 years. Comm. Levin introduced two members of the Air Force Academy Band, Master Sgt. Jeremy Laukhuf, Music Director and TSgt. Andrew Benton, Tour Director. They were in the Bay Area setting up their first of November Tour. The band features classical and pop rock and they will present concerts all over the Bay Area during the first week in November.

A discussion followed on how much time speakers should be allowed to speak during Public Comments. Comm. Levin made a motion that speakers be allowed 5 minutes and that those with special reports should be allowed for 10 minutes for their presentation, with the President given the authority to give more time if needed. 2nd by Comm. Champagne. Motion passed.

PRESIDENTS REPORT - Comm. Guglielmoni welcomed newly appointed commissioner Anthony Alfidi to the commission. He reported that he attended the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Convention and that there are many changes planned within the Department of Veterans Affairs. The President spoke at the convention.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Comm. Raymond Wong reported that he and Dara attended the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Convention and that the Vice President spoke. They also visited the VFW National Home for Children in Grand Rapids, Mich. He is now on his way to attend his Destroyer USS Towers reunion, where he serves as President.

COMMISSION GOALS AND PLANS – Comm. Levin recommended that now that the American Legion War Memorial Commission has stable leadership and their office is open every weekday from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, that the commission should start using their office, at 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101, Veterans Building, as the commissions address. President Guglielmoni agreed and that will now be our official address.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE - Comm. Thompson reported that the Veterans Employment Committee EDD 2011 Job Fair, would be held at the University of Phoenix Campus. They are going to give their full support to the event.

LEGISLATION EVALUATION – Comm. Raymond Wong submitted copies of current state bills that would effect veterans, including a bill pertaining Stolen Valor. Comm. Levin made a motion that the commission support Stolen Valor legislation. 2nd by Comm. Alfidi, who will draft a letter in support of Stolen Valor legislation and it will be reviewed at the next commission meeting. Motion passed.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS – Comm. Caldera reported that he had met with Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass pertaining to his formal charges against the prior leadership of the American Legion District 8 and the American Legion War Memorial Commission, that they had not handled the groups finances in a proper manner. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that Comm. Caldera and Alfidi, with evaluation by Deputy City Attorney Snodgrass, would draft a carefully worded letter on this subject for approval of the members of the commission.

VETERANS PROJECTS – Comm. Levin made a motion, 2nd by Comm. Champagne and Thompson to accept the draft resolution written by Comm. Noetzel, pertaining to the commission support of the War Memorial Board of Trustees Memorial Court Veterans Monument and project identification sign. Motion passed.

WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING – Comm. Levin made a motion to support the American Legion War Memorial Veterans Service Organizations Veterans Building Project. A plan to bring these groups into the Veterans Building, so that our returning veterans could receive these needed services. 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS – Comm. Caldera would like to make an appointment with Supervisor Mirkarimi, to discuss the Veterans Building issues. Comm. Levin stated that this should be done by the entire commission and that the commission should take a more aggressive position on this subject. That we should give our support to the American Legion War Memorial Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Veterans Day Parade on Sunday, Nov. 7th and Fleet Week will be held from Oct. 8 to Oct. 11.

HONORS REPORT AND ADJOURNMENT – In memory of the 5,450+ Americans killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide during August.

Dara Wong, Commission Secretary

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS -**
- 7. REPORTS**

- A. PRESIDENT -**
- B. VICE PRESIDENT -**
- C. SECRETARY -**
- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -**
- E. EMPLOYMENT -**
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE -**
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS -**

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H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Commission support for the Stolen Valor Act and legislation support. Discussion and possible action.

I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. Caldera's formal charges against the prior leadership of American Legion District 8 and the War Memorial Veterans Commission. Discussion and possible action.

J. VETERANS PROJECTS - Sunday, Nov. 7th Veterans Day Parade.

K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BLDG. - American Legion District 8th, Nov. 10th, Green Room Event.

8. OLD BUSINESS -

9. NEW BUSINESS -

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,550+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in September.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE SUNSHINE ORDINANCE

Government's duty is to serve the public, reaching its decisions in full view of the public. Commissions, boards, councils and other agencies of the City and County exist to conduct the people's business. This ordinance assures that deliberations are conducted before the people and that City operations are open to the people's review.

For information on your rights under the Sunshine Ordinance (Chapters 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code) or to report a violation of the ordinance, please contact:

Frank Darby, Administrator
Sunshine Ordinance Task Force
554-7724

Copies of the Sunshine Ordinance can be obtained from the Administrator of the Sunshine Task Force, the San Francisco Public Library and on the City's website at www.sfgov.org.

DISABILITY ACCESS

The Veterans Building is between Grove and McAllister Streets and is wheelchair accessible. The closest BART and MUNI Metro Station is Civic Center, about three blocks away. Accessible MUNI lines nearest City Hall are: 42 Downtown Loop, 49 Van Ness-Mission and F-Market & MUNI Metro (Civic Center Station).

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In order to assist the City's efforts to accommodate persons with severe allergies, environmental illnesses, multiple chemical sensitivity or related disabilities, attendees at public meetings are reminded that others may be sensitive to various chemical based products. Please help the City accommodate these individuals.

LOBBYIST ORDINANCE

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**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of October 4th, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

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VETERANS EMPLOYMENT

Commissioner Thompson reported the next VEC/EDD 2011 planning meeting will be held:
University of Phoenix
1 Front Street
San Francisco, CA 94111-5325

HEALTH & WELFARE

Commissioner Cauley reported the Veterans Connect (Project Homeless Connect 36) event will be held Wednesday, November 10th, 2010 10:00AM-3:00PM, accepting donations, all clients-veterans must be pre-registered:
SFVAMC VA Downtown Clinic
401-3rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1214

WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Previous entry from Michael Williams, during public comments.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS

President Guglielmoni reported DAV \$ 5,000.00 wheelchairs donations, hearing impaired display. Commissioner Caldera reported various AL Post #315 activities.

HOMELESS VETERANS

Commissioner Gibbs reported 450 veterans were assisted at the East Bay Stand-down August 2010 event.

LEGISLATION EVALUATION

Commissioner R. Wong reported on the bills signed/chaptered by the Governor:

- AB 498 Vehicles: special interest license plates (Mary Hayashi, Hayward; coauthored Ted Lieu, Torrance); supporting ex-POWs' option to purchase veterans' license plate instead, without fees
- AB 1088 Taxpayer contributions: California Veterans Fund (Nathan Fletcher, San Diego)
- AB 1729 Civil service examinations: veterans' preference (Mariko Yamada, Davis)
- AB 1757 Veterans cemetery (William Monning, Santa Cruz)
- AB 1829 Military decorations: fraud (Paul Cook, Yucaipa)
- AB 1908 Vehicles: specializes license plates: veterans organizations (Paul Cook, Yucaipa)
- SB 1057 State holidays: Veterans Day: state office closure (Jeff Denham, Merced)
- SB 1296 Peace officer training; traumatic brain injury; post-traumatic stress disorder (Lou Correa, Santa Ana)

Commissioner R. Wong reported the following bills were vetoed:

- AB 1925 Veterans courts (Mary Salas, Chula Vista)
- AB 2784 Veterans (Paul Cook, Yucaipa; Mary Salas, Chula Vista) to increase size/oversight of California Veterans Board

Commissioner Affidi drafted a letter about Michael Gerold's intent to defraud, for the district attorney office, accepting various commissioners' suggestions, further advice/review from Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass. A 2nd letter will be forthcoming.

Commissioner Affidi drafted resolution for the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to support AB 1829 military decorations: fraud, Stolen Valor Act (federal version)

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Noetzel's letter to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors

NEW BUSINESS

The city-sponsored 2010 Veterans' Day parade application will be posted forthwith on the website, e-mail invitations ASAP. Miscellaneous corrections will be made.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This month will be very busy, San Francisco will be welcoming

- 2010 Fleet Week, chaired by Major General J. Michael Myatt (USMC Ret.) <http://www.fleetweek.us>
- 142nd annual Italian Heritage festivities/parade <http://www.sfcolumbusday.org/events/index.html>
- 99th anniversary Republic of China (Taiwan) National Day events/parade

Roger Dong mentioned there will be a November 10th, 2010 ALWMC event, held at the Marines' Memorial Association.

Commissioner Varni announced he had resigned as aide to Secretary of the U.S. Army

HONORS REPORT and ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned in memory of the 5,710 Americans killed in Iraq (4,411) and Afghanistan (1,299), the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, the veterans that died because of suicide during the month of September.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15PM

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of October 4th, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

President Guglielmoni called the meeting to order at 6:04PM, a quorum being present. President Guglielmoni led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL

	present	absent	excused
James Guglielmoni	x		
Anthony Affidi	x		
Regalado Baldonado			x
Jill Buck			x
John Caldera	x		
Veronika Cauley	x		
Renie Champagne	x		
George Gibbs	x		
Chris Gruwell			x
Wallace Levin			x
Stephen Noetzel	x		
Michael Thompson	x		
Robert Varni	x		
Edwin Wilkerson	x		
Raymond Wong	x		
Dara Wong	x		

Twelve (12) commissioners present, eight (8) commissioners required for quorum. Margaret Champagne, Roger Dong, Beth Martinez, Michael Williams, were present.

Acceptance for approval of October 4th, 2010 agenda. Motion by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner Cauley. No abstention.

Acceptance for approval of September 13th, 2010 minutes. Motion by Commissioner Wilkerson, 2nd by Commissioner Caldera, no abstention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

By invitation from Commissioner Gibbs, Beth Martinez (Possible Society of California, based in Albany <http://www.possiblesociety.org>) spoke about aqua chi, welcome warriors program (group hydro-therapy, warm waters therapies, writs of purification) at the Janet Pomeroy <http://www.janetpomeroy.org/> center pool. Various commissioners voiced there were no proof of concepts. President Guglielmoni made suggestions (1) to find sponsors; (2) SFVAMC recreational therapists.

Michael Williams summarized his work with the War Memorial Veterans Building space requirements: Mayor's office of disabilities (money support, time); PCs for veterans' use; SBA for veterans' entrepreneurs; future tenants; needing commissioners' help for support letter, meeting at EDD October 7th, 2010 1:00-5:00PM.

Roger Dong, ALWMC chairman, reiterated Michael Williams' WMVB position for letter of support. President Guglielmoni suggested the commissioners may individually write a letter.

The following committee reports were submitted:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

No report.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Commissioner R. Wong reported recent USS Towers DDG-9 reunion held in Baltimore, Maryland in honor of four-star RADM John Henry Towers, U.S. Navy, Commander of the Pacific Fleet during World War II

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars <http://www.lavfsc.org> will be making a donation to SFVAMC NCIRE program <http://www.ncire.org> this Friday, October 8th, 2010

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

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MEETING AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 10/4/10.**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS -**
- 7. REPORTS**

A. PRESIDENT – Officer Nomination Committee. Discussion and possible action.

B. VICE PRESIDENT -

C. SECRETARY -

D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS – Mayor Newsom's 311 portal for returning military veterans. Discussion and possible action.

E. EMPLOYMENT -

F. HEALTH & WELFARE – Fort Miley VA Medical Center expansion roadblocks. Discussion and possible action.

G. HOMELESS VETERANS -

H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Commission support for the Stolen Valor Act and legislation support. Discussion and possible action.

I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Comm. Caldera's formal charges against the prior leadership of American Legion District 8 and the War Memorial Veterans Commission. Discussion and possible action.

J. VETERANS PROJECTS - Nov. 7th 11:00 a.m. Veterans Day Parade. American Indian, Nov. 7th 2:00 p.m. Veterans Memorial Court Ceremony.

K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BLDG. - American Legion District 8th, Nov. 10th 7:30 p.m., Green Room Benefit Concert.

8. OLD BUSINESS – Air Force Academy Band Bay Area tour, 10/31-11/6.

9. NEW BUSINESS – Veterans Memorial Court, Nov. 10, 12 noon ceremony.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,600+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in October.

SPECIAL MEETING

The Nomination Committee will meet after the above meeting. The Agenda will be Evaluation of Candidates for 2011 and Public Comments. Discussion and possible action.

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**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of November 8th, 2010 meeting
(415) 554-6036**

President Guglielmoni called the meeting to order at 6:09PM, a quorum being present. President Guglielmoni led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE – ROLL CALL

	present	absent	excused
James Guglielmoni	x		
Anthony Alfidi	x		
Regalado Baldonado			x
Jill Buck			x
John Caldera	x		
Veronika Cauley			x
Renie Champagne	x		
George Gibbs	x		
Chris Gruwell	x		
Wallace Levin	x		
Stephen Noetzel	x		
Michael Thompson	x		
Robert Varni	x		
Edwin Wilkerson	x		
Raymond Wong	x		
Dara Wong	x		

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Thirteen (13) commissioners present, nine (9) commissioners required for quorum. Margaret Champagne, Roger Dong, Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass, were present.

Acceptance for approval of November 8th, 2010 agenda. Motion by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner Wilkerson, no abstention.

Acceptance for approval of October 4th, 2010 minutes. Motion by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner Levin, no abstention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Roger Dong, ALWMC chairman, summarized the current/future War Memorial Veterans Building space requirements, veterans service offices, negotiating with SFWMPAC Board of Trustees, bringing computers/furniture, EDD, Vet Center, etc. Into WMVB.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The committee shall consist of the past commission's presidents (George Gibbs, Wallace Levin, Michael Thompson, Edwin Wilkerson). Commissioner Noetzel noted there will be nine (9) commission members term expiring January 31st, 2011, evaluating 3 slots, the board undecided, makeup of commission, depended upon Board of Supervisor, selecting commission candidate. Following discussion, and on Commissioner Guglielmoni motion to support the committee, 2nd by Commissioner Levin, the following resolution was unanimously adopted.

The following committee reports were submitted:

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

South Florida philanthropist Lois Pope hosted the ground-breaking of the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, which will be within view of the Capitol, on a 2.4 acre plot, across from the U.S. Botanic Garden, November 10th, 2010, after twenty (20) years \$ 83 million fundraiser, including the recent Diane Musselmann (<http://www.advdm.org> director) fundraising walk.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Commissioner R. Wong reported that BART launched (available January 5th, 2010, announced by BART Board President James Fang) military pass program, allocated \$ 50,000.00 for active duty only <http://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2010/news20100107.aspx>

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Commissioner D. Wong circulated CDVA Operation Welcome Home <http://www.cdva.ca.gov/newhome.aspx> materials received from Sacramento, while attending CDVA-CSCVC October meeting.

**City & County of San Francisco
Veterans Affairs Commission
minutes of November 8th, 2010 meeting
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EMPLOYMENT

Commissioner Thompson reported the next VEC/EDD May 12th, 2011 job fair will be held 10:00AM-2:00PM, needs help publicizing the event:

University of Phoenix
1 Front Street
San Francisco, CA 94111-5325

HEALTH & WELFARE

President Guglielmoni updated the members regarding the San Francisco VAMC parking expansion roadblocks to accommodate 400 parking spaces: neighbors, planning commission, federal-state agencies (GGNRA, UCSF, NCIRE), commuters, museum visitors. Following discussion, and on Commissioner Levin's motion to support all veterans' services, 2nd by Commissioner Wilkerson, the following resolution was unanimously adopted. Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass advised to go ahead with letter of inquiry, to explore information to support resolution to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

HOMELESS VETERANS

Veterans Connect (Project Homeless Connect 36) event will be held Wednesday, November 10th, 2010 10:00AM-3:00PM, accepting donations, all clients-veterans must be pre-registered:

SFVAMC VA Downtown Clinic
401-3rd Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1214

LEGISLATION EVALUATION

Commissioner R. Wong reported on the bills signed/chaptered by the Governor, previously e-mailed:

- AB 498 Vehicles: special interest license plates (Mary Hayashi, Hayward; coauthored Ted Lieu, Torrance); supporting ex-POWs' option to purchase veterans' license plate instead, without fees
- AB 1088 Taxpayer contributions: California Veterans Fund (Nathan Fletcher, San Diego)
- AB 1729 Civil service examinations: veterans' preference (Mariko Yamada, Davis)
- AB 1757 Veterans cemetery (William Monning, Santa Cruz)
- AB 1829 Military decorations: fraud (Paul Cook, Yucaipa)
- AB 1908 Vehicles: specializes license plates: veterans organizations (Paul Cook, Yucaipa)
- SB 1057 State holidays: Veterans Day: state office closure (Jeff Denham, Merced)
- SB 1296 Peace officer training; traumatic brain injury; post-traumatic stress disorder (Lou Correa, Santa Ana)

Commissioner R. Wong reported the following bills were vetoed:

- AB 1925 Veterans courts (Mary Salas, Chula Vista)
- AB 2784 Veterans (Paul Cook, Yucaipa; Mary Salas, Chula Vista) to increase size/oversight of California Veterans Board

Commissioner Alfidì presented two revised documents on the subject of the conduct of former AL leader Michael Gerold. The first document was a draft resolution that urged the City & County of San Francisco government to support enactment of strong federal and state Stolen Valor laws. After discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Caldera, 2nd by Commissioner Noetzel, for a vote to adopt and forward the resolution as written. Motion passed unanimously and resolution (copy attached) will be forwarded to Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

A second document was also examined and discussed by the commission, namely Commissioner Alfidì's latest draft of a proposed letter from the Veterans Affairs Commission, detailing Michael Gerold's misconduct, with respect to his dealings with local veterans' organizations. After examination and some discussion, several suggested edits were offered. The item was then tabled for further revision and renewed motion for consideration at the next commission meeting.

NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS

Commissioner Caldera's formal charges against the AL District #8 and ALWMC prior leadership dovetails into Commissioner Alfidì's previous discussion.

VETERANS PROJECTS

The Veterans' Day parade was held Sunday, November 7th, 2010 11:00AM.

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Commissioner Caldera announced the Ohlone Costanoan Carmel Tribe performed a cleansing ceremony, War Memorial Court complex, November 7th, 2010 2:00PM, supported by AL Post #315, Veterans for Peace, AL District #8, actions approved by SFWMPAC Board of Trustees

WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Previous entry from Roger Dong, during public comments.

Commissioner(s) Caldera and Levin announced Rebecca Boyko event, featuring jazz samba/patriotic tunes, to benefit the AL District #8, November 10th, 2010 7:30PM

OLD BUSINESS

U.S. Air Force Academy Band will be performing at various Bay Area counties venues from October 31st, 2010, through November 6th, 2010

NEW BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Guglielmoni announced there will be:

- Avenue of Flags ceremony, Golden Gate National Cemetery, San Bruno, November 11th, 2010 11:00AM
- Veterans Commons, 150 Otis Street groundbreaking, November 9th, 2010

Commissioner D. Wong reported there will be (invitation only):

- San Francisco VAMC Veterans' Day ceremony, November 10th, 2010 11:00AM (federal employees, VAVS volunteers)

Commissioner Levin announced the San Francisco Veterans Memorial press event, November 10th, 2010 12:00PM noon, with the three (3) design finalists, the memorial to be formally dedicated in November 2013, ninety (90) years from the original 1920's vision of San Francisco War Memorial complex.

Commissioner Caldera reminded everyone of the Swords to Plowshares' dinner, Grand Hyatt, November 11th, 2010

HONORS REPORT and ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned in memory of the 5,798 Americans killed in Iraq (4,414) and Afghanistan (1,384), the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco, the veterans that died because of suicide during the month of October.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32PM

COMMISSION GOALS & PLANS

Jason Elliott, Mayoral Aide, came in during the nominations committee meeting, Commissioner(s) Wong, had stayed to listen to Jason's <http://www.sfc11.org> portal presentation, to articulate what is available, which was deployed without consulting the commission for advice; using city employees to do veterans' outreach: crisis intervention, education, facebook, homelessness, housing, , PTSD, referral to federal/state, substance abuse, vocational services.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 101
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

Gavin Newsom, Mayor
Office of the Mayor
1 Dr. Carlton Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dec. 6, 2010

Dear Mayor Newsom:

The Veterans Affairs Commission's mandate is to advise the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on issues and matters pertaining to veterans. There is no San Francisco veterans issue more important to veterans than the 1927 Trust Agreement that gave them the right of free use of space in the War Memorial Veterans Building. The building was built in honor of America's World War I Veterans and opened in 1932. The Trust gave the right to control the veterans space in the building to the American Legion. The War Memorial Trustees appointed by the Mayor can only deal with an organization made up of members of the San Francisco American Legion Posts. That organization is called the American Legion War Memorial Commission.

The Veterans Affairs Commission supports the American Legion War Memorial Commission's new concept of bringing veterans service organizations into the building. These organizations will be in the building to actually help and give needed services to all veterans, especially those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Swords to Plowshares already has an office in the building and they are providing employment services to veterans and the Association For Service Disabled Veterans also has an office that helps disabled veterans start their own business. We now support the effort to bring the United Service Organization (USO) into the building to give help and support to active duty service members, their families and veterans.

America is a far different place than it was in 1932. With time things change and America has changed. The veterans use of the Veterans Building must also change to match the needs of our modern society.

Sincerely,

Jim Guglielmoni, President

c/c: Board of Supervisors
War Memorial Trustees
American Legion National Commander,
California State Commander, S. F. District 8
Commander and Commission Chairman.

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2010, 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)**

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MEETING AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 11/08/10.
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS -

7. REPORTS

- A. PRESIDENT - Officer Nominations for 2011.
 - B. VICE PRESIDENT -
 - C. SECRETARY -
 - D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS - Mayor Newsom's 311 portal for returning military veterans. Discussion and possible action.
 - E. EMPLOYMENT -
 - F. HEALTH & WELFARE - Fort Miley VA Medical Center expansion roadblocks. Discussion and possible action.
 - G. HOMELESS VETERANS -
 - H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION - Commission support for the Stolen Valor Act and legislation support. Discussion and possible action.
 - I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS - Commissions formal charges against the prior leadership of American Legion District 8 and American Legion War Memorial Commission. Discussion and possible action.
 - J. VETERANS PROJECTS - Veterans Memorial Court Ceremony.
 - K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING - Support for the American Legion War Memorial Commissions efforts to bring veteran's service organizations into the Veterans Building. Discussion & possible action.
8. OLD BUSINESS -
 9. NEW BUSINESS -
 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -
 11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,800+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in November.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE SUNSHINE ORDINANCE

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Dec. 6, 2010

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President Guglielmoni called the meeting to order at 6:09pm, a quorum being present. President Guglielmoni led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners **Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Gibbs, Gruwell, Guglielmoni, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson, Varni, D. Wong & R. Wong.** (12)

Absent: Commissioners **Jill Buck, Veronika Cauley, Renie Champagne, Edwin Wilkerson.** (all excused, due to calendar conflict or health issues)

Attending Guests: **Mr. Jason Elliott, Mr. Charles Reed & Mr. Michael Williams.**

Acceptance for approval of December 6th 2010 Meeting Agenda. Motion to accept by Comm. Levin, 2nd Comm. R. Wong. In discussion Comm. Levin added minor corrections. Comm. Noetzel added a paragraph for insertion regarding Michael Gerold discussion. After some discussion Chair agreed to TABLE acceptance of 12/6/10 Meeting Minutes for re-submittal, with corrections, at next VAC meeting.

Acceptance for approval of November 8th 2010 Meeting MINUTES. Motion by Comm. Noetzel, 2nd Comm. Levin. Motion APPROVED without dissent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Jason Elliott, Mayoral Aide, presented the <http://www.sf311.org> 'Portal' presentation, to articulate what is available. It was developed without consulting the VAC for advice; using city employees to do veterans' outreach; crisis intervention, education, day-book, homelessness, housing, PTSD, referral to federal/state, substance abuse, vocational services.

Mr. Charles Reed, (SVEC/EDD Chairman, retired SFVAMC employee in audiology/prosthetics), Michael Thompson's guest, reported about the May, 12, 2011 Veterans Job Fair & multiple veterans services offered. Also reported on the planned 12/9/10 event at St. Anthony's, which will offer employment assistance.

Mr. Michael Williams, (ALWMC) offered comments about the previous '311 Portal' presentation; War Memorial Veterans building update on Space Requirements and plans for a computerized training center in Room 219.

Presidents Report.

President Guglielmoni thanked the Commission members for cooperating with each other during the 2010 year. He does not wish to run for President again due to health/personal matters. He informs Commission that he is currently a 'CDC-17' patient for a fungus spore illness.

VICE Presidents Report.

Vice President Raymond Wong reported on the 12/4/10 Chinatown (VFW Post 4618) 65th Anniversary Dinner at the Four Seas Restaurant.

Secretary's Report.

Secretary Dara Wong announced the Wreaths Across America event (<http://www.wreathsasscrossamerica.com> ceremony, scheduled for December 12, 2010 at the Presidio. Assembly scheduled for 7:30am; event starts 9:00am. Some 1700 wreaths were donated. Participants to include: S.F. Police Dept., Fire Dept., Federal Park Police, Civil Air Patrol, US Naval Sea Cadet Corps, and various active duty members of the military. She also reported that the NEXT Wreaths Across America event has already been scheduled for December 10, 2011.

Comm. Wong also announced that ticket sales and fundraising to benefit the 2/17-18 Gold Star Parents events at the S.F. Marines Memorial Club were now on sale. Program brings together parents whose children were KIA while serving in US Armed Forces. Donations may be sent to: SGA – HONOR & REMEMBER, P.O. Box 1215, Discovery Bay, CA 94505.

Employment.

Comm. Thompson reported on the next VEC/EDD Job Fair, scheduled for May 12, 2011, from 10am to 2pm at the University of Phoenix. (at 1 Front Street, San Francisco, CA 94111). Employers should request participation via email. There will be 26 reserved parking spaces and EDD event leaders need volunteer help in marketing/publicizing the event

Health & Welfare

President Guglielmoni updated the Commission on the SFVAMC parking expansion and roadblocks to accommodate 400 parking spaces, as well as a Planning Commission Neighborhood event involving GGNRA, UCSF, NCIRE, and other state/federal agencies, plus commuters, neighbors and museum visitors.

HOMELESS Veterans.

VETERANS CONNECT (Project Homeless Connect #36), event was held on 11/10/2010. at the SFVAMC VA Downtown Clinic at 401 3rd Street, S. F. CA.

Legislative Evaluation.

Comm. R. Wong reported on relevant legislation in process including:
AB 498 Vehicles. Special Interest License Plates (supports ex-POWs option for cost free plates)

AB 1088 involves Taxpayer Contributions to CA Veterans Fund.
AB 1729 involves Veterans preferences @ Civil Service Exams
AB 1757 involves the Veterans Cemetery
AB 1829 involves Fraud involving Military Decorations
AB 1908 involves Specialized License Plates for Military Organizations
AB 1057 involves State Office Closure on Veterans Day.
AB 1296 involves PTSD and Peace Officer Training.
The following bills were VETOED:
AB 1925 Veterans Courts
AB 2784 involving increase in size of CA Veterans Oversight Board.

Comm. Alfidi then presented **two revised documents** on the subject of the **conduct of former AL leader Michael Gerold**. The first document was a **draft Resolution** that urged the City & County of San Francisco Government to **support enactment of strong federal and state Stolen Valor laws**. After discussion a **Motion was made by Comm. Caldera (2nd, Comm. Noetzel)**, for a vote to adopt and forward the Resolution as written. **Motion passed unanimously and Resolution will be forwarded to Mayor and Board of Supervisors.**

A **second document** was also examined and discussed by the Commission; namely Commissioner Alfidi's latest **DRAFT of a proposed letter from the VAC, detailing Michael Gerold's misconduct with respect to his dealings with local Veterans Organizations**. After examination and some discussion, the item was **tabled** for further revision and a renewed Motion for consideration at the next VAC meeting.

National Veterans Groups.

Comm. Caldera reports on **formal charges against AL District #8 and ALWMC prior leadership**. This dovetails into Comm. Alfidi's previous discussion.

Veterans Projects.

Comm. Levin reported on the 2010 Veteran's Day Parade, which was held on the 7th of November, 2010.

Comm. Caldera announced that the OHLONE NATION group performed a Cleansing Ceremony at the War Memorial Court on the 7th of November, at 2:00pm. The event was supported by AL Post 315, Veterans for Peace, AL District #8. All actions were approved by the SF WMPAC Board of Trustees.

War Memorial Veterans Building

See entry under Public Comments.

Commissioners Caldera and Levin reported on an event to **benefit AL District #8** in the War Memorial Veterans Building on 11/10, 2010. The fund-raising event **featured singer Rebecca Boyco** and featured Jazz, Samba, and Patriotic music.

Old Business

None

New Business.

Comm. Caldera announced that the AL Dept. of Calif. Will be hosting the AL National Commander (Jimmie Foster) for a variety of events on Dec. 9-11, 2010.

Honors Report and Adjournment.

Meeting AJORNED (at 7:50pm) in memory of the 5,845 Americans Killed in Iraq (4,147) and Afghanistan (1,428); and the December Seventh National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (Public Law 103-308), and the homeless veterans that died in S.F. and the veterans that died due to suicide during the month of November.

*Note: Minutes approved, as amended above by unanimous vote during
VAC General Meeting of April 4, 2011*

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 2011 6:00 P.M.
401 VAN NESS AVENUE, ROOM 104
WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
(415-554-6036)

MEETING AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 11/08/10 and 12/6/10
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS -

7. REPORTS

- A. PRESIDENT -
- B. VICE PRESIDENT -
- C. SECRETARY -

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2011

- D. COMM. GOALS & PLANS -
- E. EMPLOYMENT -
- F. HEALTH & WELFARE -
- G. HOMELESS VETERANS -
- H. LEGISLATION EVALUATION -
- I. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS -
- J. VETERANS PROJECTS - Opera to produce "Heart of a Soldier in 2011.
- K. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING -

8. OLD BUSINESS -
9. NEW BUSINESS -
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS -

11. HONORS REPORT & ADJOURNMENT in memory of the 5,850+ Americans killed in Iraq /Afghanistan, the homeless veterans that died in San Francisco and the veterans who died because of suicide in December.

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Jan. 3, 2011

Agenda item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC President James Guglielmoni @ 6:05pm.

Agenda item 2 – Pledge of Allegiance (Led by Comm. R. Wong)

Agenda item 3 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Gibbs, Gruwell, Guglielmoni, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson, Varni, Wilkerson, R. Wong, D. Wong (13)

Absent: Commissioners Champagne (excused, medical), Cauley, (excused, illness).

Attending Guests: Mr. Charles Reed, Mr. Roger Dong

Agenda item 4 – Approval of AGENDA

A previously distributed AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Agenda, as written (M-Wilkerson; 2nd-Caldera) passed without exception.**

Agenda item 5 – Approval of Minutes of 11/8/10 and 12/6/10 VAC meetings.

A previously distributed copy of the Draft Minutes for the 11/8/10 meeting was reviewed. It was noted that some corrections voted on at the last meeting had not been incorporated. **MOTION to table Acceptance of 11/8/10 Mtg. Minutes (M- Levin; 2nd-Noetzel) so that Secy Wong could correct, was passed without exception.**

Secretary Wong also announced that she had been unable to complete her Draft Minutes for the meeting of 12/6/10. President TABLED item for further action at the next VAC meeting.

Agenda item 6 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Guest Roger Dong reserves his comments for presentation under Agenda Item K – War Memorial Veterans Building (see below).

Comm. D. Wong reports on 1/3/11 letter received from **Cheryl Cook, of the SF County Veterans Service Office.** The letter includes new information on new service locations, hours and contact information for the SFVSO. **Comm. Levin** asks **Sec'y Elect Noetzel** to insure that all such information is incorporated into the VAC Website Pages.

Agenda item 7 – Reports

A - Presidents Report, Pres. Guglielmoni thanks Commission for support through the past year.

B – Vice Presidents Report, Comm. R. Wong. Same: "Commission heading in right direction".

C – Secretary's Report, Comm. D. Wong reports on Wreaths across America @ GG Natl. Rec. area, as well as Fundraising for Gold Star Families on 2/18 @ Marines Memorial bldg.

Election of Officers for 2011

Comm. Guglielmoni reviews nominations already made, and opens floor for new nominations. With no additional nominations, a vote is called for. Individual ballots are distributed, completed, collected, then tabulated by guest Charles Reed and Comm. Levin. After tabulation Mr. Reed announces **public vote results as follows:**

For PRESIDENT:

Commissioner VARNI received a total of 10 (ten) votes;

(Alfidi, Baldonado, Gruwell, Guglielmoni, Levin, Thompson, Varni, Wilkerson, R. Wong, D. Wong)

Commissioner CALDERA received a total of 3 (three) votes;

(Caldera, Gibbs, Noetzel).

Commissioner Robert Varni was installed the new President of the VAC for the 2011 term of office.

For Vice President:

Commissioner Ray Wong received a total of 12 votes;

(Alfidi, Caldera, Gibbs, Gruwell, Guglielmoni, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson, Varni, Wilkerson, R. Wong, D. Wong).

Commissioner Ray Wong was installed as Vice-President of the VAC for the 2011 term of office.

For Secretary:

Commissioner Stephen Noetzel received a total of 12 votes;

(Alfidi, Caldera, Gibbs, Gruwell, Guglielmoni, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson, Varni, Wilkerson, R. Wong, D. Wong).

Commissioner Stephen Noetzel was installed as the new Secretary of the VAC for the 2011 term of office. After announcements of election results, new officers were congratulated and the gavel was passed to the new Commission President, Robert Varni who presided over the balance of the meeting.

Agenda item D – Commission Goals and Plans

President Varni spoke of his vision for **Goals and Plans** of the VAC in the next year. He described his goal is to help our 'next generation' veterans become 'America's SECOND GREATEST GENERATION'. He requests that everyone come to next meeting with their own ideas for Commission projects in the next year. He suggests we investigate the status of 'Veterans Preference' in both public and private hiring practice, as well as what the Commission can do to maximize participation in educational benefits of the new GI Bill. Pres. Varni leads discussion on re-appointment of 9

Commissioners whose appointment ends on 1/31/10. Further discussion on recruitment efforts to fill the two currently opened seats with at least one female vet and preferably with YOUNG vets. Comm. Noetzel speaks of his contacts at SFSU and Chair appoints him to make contact there for recruitment of potential young vets for appointment to the VAC. Comm. Levin suggests establishment of an Advisory Committee (to the VAC), consisting of non-veteran experts who might help us in developing effective projects. Also some discussion on the potential of maximizing discounts (BART and other transport) for struggling student veterans. Pres. Varri displays a copy of the new VA magazine: 'Vanguard'. It has a variety of articles that might be helpful to the VAC. He asks Sec'y. Noetzel to arrange for mailing of the publication to all VAC Commissioners.

Agenda item E - Employment

Comm. Thompson reports on Planned Job Fair run by Univ. of Phoenix. Event will include 121 perspective employers and should garner significant employment opportunities for Bay Area veterans.

Agenda item F - Health and Welfare (no report at this meeting)

Agenda Item G - Homeless Veterans

Comm. Gibbs comments on VA Sec'y Shinsecki's pledge to eliminate veterans homelessness within 5 years, pointing out that providing shelter or a home for many homeless vets is only one of many steps needed for rehabilitation.

Agenda item H - Legislation Evaluation

Comm. R. Wong reviews highlights of page-long synopsis of current Vet-related legislation at State and Federal legislatures. He also notes that Rules and Qualifications for acquisition of 'Gold Star' vehicle license plates are available at the Calif. DMV website. Comm. Guglielmoni reports on SB 3447, the new GI Bill for Education benefits.

Agenda item I - National Veterans Groups

Comm. Guglielmoni reports that early months of year are when National Vets Groups meet to review and expand their plans and goals for legislative actions to benefit veterans and the veterans community. He urges VAC Commissioners to participate in the drafting of such legislation by attending the Planning Sessions of various VSOs (Amer. Legion, DAV, VFW, etc.)

Agenda item J - Veterans Projects:

Comm. Alfidi reports on his project to work with the S.F. Opera regarding their 2011 production of the World Premiere of a new Opera: HEART OF A SOLDIER, in the fall. The new work tells the story of Rick Rescorla, a U.S. Army Vietnam veteran who died in heroic rescue work during the tragic events of 9/11 at the World Trade Center. Comm. Alfidi is working with Ms. L'Ann Bingham of SF Opera Productions to develop ways to maximize participation by the Veterans Community in SF. Comm. Levin moves to announce the full support of the VAC for both the production of the Opera, and all events developed by this Committee for SF Veterans and their families. (2nd - Guglielmoni); passed unanimously.

Agenda item K - War Memorial Veterans Building

Guest Roger Dong, President of the War Memorial Commission (WMC) addresses the VAC on progress by the WMC in recruiting additional Veterans Service Organizations and other appropriate Patriotic Organizations (such as the USO) to commit to establishing offices and Vets Services in the War Memorial Building. Comm. Levin submits copies of two letters he recently sent to the City of SF Administration, expressing VAC support in this endeavor and urging full support by the SF Government.

Agenda Item 8 - Old Business

Comm. Noetzel inquired as to the status of the Letter to City Administration regarding Request for Investigation of actions of former American Legion leader Michael Gerold. Sending of the letter was tabled last month, pending approval of final text by City. Comm. Guglielmoni and Comm. Alfidi (author of the letter) explained that final text approval was indeed received from City Attorney Snodgrass and original Letters were hand delivered to the Mayor, and all Supervisors, on the 15th of December. Copies were also mailed to local, state and National American Legion Commanders. Comm. D. Wong says she will insure that all Commissioners receive a copy of the letter. To facilitate communication between Commissioners, Comm. Levin distributes copies of updated list of full contact information for all current Commission members. He also describes his progress in facilitating mailing of VAC correspondence through City of San Francisco government offices.

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Comm. Thompson announces that the Order of the Purple Heart Assoc. is seeking Iraq & Afghan vets to take to lunch under their hospitality program.

Agenda Item 11 - Honors Report & Adjournment.

Meeting ADJOURNED after moment of silence in memory of the 5,850+ Americans killed in Iraq/Afghanistan, as well as homeless and/or suicide deaths of San Francisco Veterans.

This DRAFT of the 1/31/11 VAC Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted for comment and edit suggestions, by Stephen S. Noetzel, Secretary, VAC, on 1/5/11.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Jan. 3, 2011

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Comm. Thompson announces that the Order of the Purple Heart Assoc. is seeking Iraq & Afghan vets to take to lunch under their hospitality program.

Agenda Item 11 - Honors Report & Adjournment.

Meeting ADJOURNED after moment of silence in memory of the 5,850+ Americans killed in Iraq/Afghanistan, as well as homeless and/or suicide deaths of San Francisco Veterans.

Minutes of the 1/3/11 VAC Meeting (as written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel) were approved without dissent at the VAC meeting of 2/7/11.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, FEBRUARY 7, 2011
MEETING AGENDA

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1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for changes and/or Approval
4. REVIEW of Previous Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
*Note: Comm. D. Wong to present corrected Minutes for Meetings of Nov. 8, 2010 and Dec. 6, 2010.
Comm. Noetzel to present DRAFT Minutes for meeting of Jan. 3, 2011*
5. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for general comments by guests).*
6. Officers REPORTS:
 - A. President's Report; General comments; **President VARNI** (Including introduction of the PRIMARY MEETING ITEM, as detailed below, Agenda item 8H.)
 - A. Vice President's Report; General comments; **Vice President R. WONG**
 - B. Secretary's Report; General comments; **Secretary NOETZEL** (Reports on proceedings of the 1/13/11 SFSU event: 'Every Day is Veteran's Day at the CSU', including RECRUITMENT FLYER for student veterans at S.F. colleges/universities)
7. REVIEW of ANNUAL REPORT for changes and/or Approval
8. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES
 - A. Veterans Employment (Comm. THOMPSON, lead)
 - B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE (Comm. NOETZEL to report on development progress on project to establish City of S.F. Registry of Veterans at risk for Depleted Uranium Munitions Poisoning).
 - C. HOMELESS Veterans
 - D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION (Comm. R. WONG lead. Also, Comm. NOETZEL to introduce proposed RESOLUTION in support of HR Bill #210, titled: **Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011**)
 - E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS
 - F. VETERANS PROJECTS
 - G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
 - H. COMMISSION GOALS AND PLANS: **President VARNI** takes lead in major 'Open Forum' discussion on topic: **WHAT SHALL BE THE VAC BUSINESS PLAN, for 2011?** Participation by all Commissioners, guests, encouraged.
9. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Review of status of Applications for Re-Appointment to VAC by the NINE (9) Commissioners whose Commission Term expires at end of this month.
 - B. Review of status of HEART OF A SOLDIER Opera Project (Comm. Alfidi, Lead)
 - C. Review of status of inquiry into VETERANS PREFERENCE RULES in Government Service hiring.
 - D. Review of distribution of letters to new Mayor and Supervisors Re: Request for Investigation of actions of former American Legion leader Michael Gerold.
10. NEW BUSINESS:
11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of the 5,860+ Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.
12. ADJORNMENT

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Feb. 7, 2011

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC President Robert VARNI at 6:10pm. The meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by Comm. R. WONG.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Gibbs, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson, Varni, Wilkerson, R. Wong, D. Wong (11)

Absent: Commissioners R. Champagne (excused, medical), V. Cauley, (excused, medical), J. Guglielmoni (excused, calendar conflict) Gruwell (un-notified).

Attending Guests: Mr. Charles Reed, Mr. James Small. Also in attendance; Mr. Wayne Snodgrass, office of the City Attorney.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

A previously distributed AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Agenda**, as written (M-Levin; 2nd-Alfidi) **passed without exception.**

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes of 11/8/10, 12/6/10 and 1/3/11 VAC meetings.

Past-Secretary **Dara Wong** announced that she had completed her corrections to the 11/8/10 meeting and Emailed them to Commissioners earlier in the day. She also said that she has still been unable to complete her Corrected Minutes for the meeting of 12/6/10. President Varni TABLED these items for further action at the next VAC meeting.

A previously distributed copy of the Draft Minutes (by Comm. S. Noetzel) for the January 3, 2011 meeting was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Minutes** as written (M-Levin; 2nd-Alfidi) **passed without exception.**

Agenda Item 5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comm. Noetzel introduced his guest to the meeting, **MR. JAMES SMALL**, a recent veteran and current student at City College. Mr. Small spent two tours of duty in combat zones of Iraq as a tank crewman and on Humvee Patrols. He plans to enter Law School in the near future. *Mr. SMALL then addressed the Commission and expressed his interest in the group and its work. He said he is deeply interested in working for veteran's rights and benefits and stated that he is currently considering submitting his application for a seat on the Commission.* Mr. Small then greets the group to affirm his interest.

Agenda Item 6 – Officers Reports

A - Presidents Report, Pres. VARNI deferred his report until Agenda Item #8H; Commission Goals and Plans (below).
B – Vice Presidents Report, Comm. R. Wong. Reports on Jan. 29 VFW sponsored picnic for residents of Community Living Center @ Ft. Miley.

C – Secretary's Report, Comm. S. Noetzel deferred his report until Agenda Item 7, 8F, and 9 (See below).

Agenda Item 7 – Review of ANNUAL REPORT.

Comm. Noetzel distributes copies of DRAFT #2 of the VAC ANNUAL REPORT for 2010. He explains that DRAFT #2 includes the addition of a section that highlights individual effort on behalf of veterans done by members of the Commission during 2010. Commissioners Caldera and D. Wong expresses concerns and displeasure with the citation of individual names for special honor in the Report. Secretary Noetzel asks if it is the sense of the Commission that the INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS section should be deleted. Comm. LEVIN suggests that inclusion of such efforts are important to the overall work of the Commission, and perhaps a compromise might be to include the individual ACTIVITIES, while omitting specific names, and offers this idea as a **MOTION.** (2nd by Comm. D. Wong). **Motion passed** without dissent. Secretary Noetzel will prepare DRAFT #3 (to include mandated edit) for final vote of approval at the March VAC meeting.

A discussion then ensued on the subject of the ATTENDANCE GRID (included on the Annual Report), and the fact that Commissioner Cauley has missed more than half of the meetings during 2010. President Varni asked what provisions there are in the VAC Bylaws with regard to censure due to poor attendance, and specifically what action can be taken to address the poor attendance of the Commissioner. After discussion of Bylaws provisions that require notification to the Mayor in the event that a Commissioner misses (at least) three consecutive meetings, President Varni asks Secretary Noetzel to prepare correspondence to Comm. Cauley with regard to this problem. Secretary Noetzel agrees to prepare a DRAFT of such a letter for edit and promulgation by the President.

Agenda Item 8 – REPORTS on Ongoing Issues:

A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT (no report at this meeting)

B. Veterans Health and Welfare (no report at this meeting)

C. Homeless Veterans (no report at this meeting)

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D. Veterans related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. Wong reviews excerpts of the proposed new State Budget and its implications for severe cuts to Veterans programs including cuts to County Veterans Service Offices, as well as elimination of the recently initiated veterans 'Welcome Home' program. During discussion Comm. Levin suggests Agenda Item for next VFP meeting: Letter of support for full funding for City Veterans Service office. In addition, President Varni asks Sec'y Noetzel to invite Cheryl Cook (County Veterans Service Officer) to the March VFP meeting to speak on funding provisions of the County Veterans Service Offices., and other issues within her purview. Comm. Wong also reviewed elements of Calif. Assembly Bill #201 (introduced by Assemblyman Butler) which proposes the establishments of Veterans Courts in California Counties.

E. National Veterans Groups: (no report at this meeting)

F. Veterans Projects: Comm. Noetzel distributes copies of his DRAFT RESOLUTION urging VFP support for Federal Legislation (HR 210), the FILIPINO VETERANS FAIRNESS ACT, recently introduced by Rep. Jackie Speier of San Mateo. Commissioners were asked to review the DRAFT and offer suggested changes in preparation for a vote of approval at the March VAC meeting.

G. War Memorial Veterans Building: Comm. Levin reports on status of ongoing negotiations between the Veterans War Memorial Commission (VWMC), and the Veterans War Memorial Building Board of Trustees, regarding space allocation and use of the building after the scheduled building retrofit. Commissioners Levin and Alfidi both speak regarding their disappointment with internal disputes within the VWMC indicating the 'internal' squabbles continue to be a major impediment to submittal of a cohesive long-term VETERANS USAGE PLAN for the building.

H. Commission GOALS AND PLANS President Varni opened discussion with a repeat of his Primary Question: What shall be the BUSINESS of the VAC, in 2011? (or) What PROJECTS shall the VAC accomplish, on behalf of Veterans, this year? Comm. Levin opened discussion by distributing copies of recent newspaper articles documenting the LASTING EFFECT of the high UNEMPLOYMENT RATE during the current recession. He proposed that we would do well to develop some projects regarding JOB DEVELOPMENT for unemployed veterans. Comm. Noetzel then introduced his suggestion for an EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM wherein we develop a LETTER (from the VAC) addressed directly to the Human Resources Directors of the Top 50 Employers in the City of San Francisco. This project would include substantial RESEARCH and FOLLOW-UP with each firm, in an effort to get them to commit to a PUBLISHED CORPORATE PLAN with respect to their COMMITMENT TO HIRE VETERANS during their next fiscal year. The idea would be for each volunteering Commissioner to take responsibility for Research, Contact and Follow-up of three or four specific Corporations, and continue unrelenting follow-up, including phone calls and possibly personal visitation to Corporate offices, in an effort to gain specific Corporate Veterans Hiring Commitments and Policies. After considerable discussion President Varni appointed Commissioner Noetzel to take the lead on development of such a project, and asked for volunteers to work in consultation with Sec'y Noetzel on the project. Commissioners ALFIDI and WILKERSON then volunteered to participate. President Varni then asked if anyone was aware of the current status of State or Federal laws requiring private companies, or public agencies to (either) RETAIN jobs for employees who leave to go on active military duty, or (in the case of public agencies) provide hiring preference 'points' for job applicants who are vets, and for vendors owned and run by veterans. After considerable discussion it was generally agreed that significant research was required in this area.

Agenda Item 9 - Old Business

Comm. Alfidi reports on his project to work with the S.F. Opera regarding the 2011 World Premiere of the Opera: HEART OF A SOLDIER. Comm. Noetzel inquired as to the status of the Letter to City Administration regarding Request for Investigation of actions of former American Legion leader Michael Gerold. He asked if the authorized letter was also sent to the NEW S.F. mayor and new Supervisors. Commissioner D. WONG assured the Commission that such letters have indeed been sent. There was further discussion about the possibility of sending a letter (on the subject) directly to the new S.F. District Attorney Gascone. President Varni will follow up. Comm. Levin announces that the American Legion (internal) 'trial' regarding charges against Mr. Michael Gerold is now scheduled for 9am on Thursday, the 10th of February.

Agenda Item 10 - New Business

Comm. Levin suggests formation of an Advisory Committee of non-Commissioners who are interested in working on the Projects of the Commission. Comm. Noetzel distributes copies of recruitment flyers for VAC applicants.

Agenda Item 11 - Announcements Comm. Caldera distributes copies of flyers for the 21st Annual JOB FAIR (hosted by the San Francisco Veterans Employment Committee), is scheduled for the 11th of May, 2011.

Comm. Wilkerson reports on a successful JOINT VISIT made by himself and President Varni, with the DIRECTOR of the Ft. Miley VA facility.

Agenda Item 12 - Honors Report & Adjournment.

Meeting ADJOURNED after moment of silence in memory of the 5,900+ American forces killed in Iraq/Afghanistan, plus an unknown number of homeless and/or suicide deaths of San Francisco Veterans.

Minutes of the 2/7/11 VAC Meeting submitted by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

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Monday, MARCH 7, 2011 MEETING AGENDA

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1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of Previous Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
Note: Review of Comm. D. Wong's corrected Minutes for Meetings of Nov. 8, 2010 and Dec. 6, 2010. Secretary Noetzel to present DRAFT Minutes for meeting of Feb. 7, 2011.
5. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).*
 - A. President Varni will introduce his guest, Mr. Philip Stage, Program Support Manager, Army Reserve Employee Relations. Mr. Stage will report on his experience and suggestions for development of employment opportunities for veterans.
 - B. Comm. Levin will introduce Ms. Cheryl Cook, Asst. County Veterans Service Officer and Program Supervisor at the San Francisco County Veterans Office. Ms. Cook will report on the impact of proposed State budget CUTS to critical County Veterans Service Office programs.
6. Officers' REPORTS:
 - A. President's Report; President Varni
 - B. Vice President's Report; VP R. Wong
 - C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel
7. REVIEW and approval of mandated corrections to 2010 ANNUAL REPORT.
8. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:
 - A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead)
 - B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
 - C. HOMELESS Veterans. Comm.
 - D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. WONG lead. Also, Comm. NOETZEL to seek vote of approval for his proposed RESOLUTION in support of HR Bill #210, titled: Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011
 - E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS. Comm. ALFIDI to report on the 2/10/11 American Legion internal TRIAL of former A.L. District 8 Commander Michael Gerold, and the impact and implications of his conviction and expulsion from the Legion. Discussion to include possible further VAC action.
 - F. VETERANS PROJECTS. Comm. NOETZEL, (Lead), to report on development progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
 - G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Comm. Levin (Lead)
8. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Review of status of Applications for Re-Appointment to VAC by the NINE (9) Commissioners whose Commission Terms expired on 1/31/11. Comm. Noetzel to report on negotiations with Bd. Of Supervisors Rules Committee Chair, and Mayor's Director of Commissions and Appointments with respect to new appointment procedures & policies.
 - B. Comm. Alfidi, (Lead) to review of status of HEART OF A SOLDIER Opera Project
 - C. Review of status of inquiry into VETERANS PREFERENCE RULES in Government Service hiring.
10. NEW BUSINESS:
11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.
12. ADJORNMENT
Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify at least one of the following contacts prior to meeting:
Robert Varni, President, at email robtvarni@aol.com or telephone: 415-397-3599, or
Stephen Noetzel, Secretary, at email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the FIRST Monday of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 104 of the War Memorial Veterans Building, at 401 Van Ness Avenue (across from City Hall).

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

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The War Memorial Veterans Building (between Grove & McAllister Streets) is wheelchair accessible via front entrance (401 Van Ness). There is wheelchair accessible public parking nearby, including the underground garage at the north side of City Hall. The nearby BART/MUNI station (Civic Center) is wheelchair accessible as are nearby city bus lines and stops. For more Public Transit information services, call 415-923-6142.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of March 7, 2011

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

After waiting a bit to achieve a (nine member) Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC President Robert VARNI at 6:15pm. The meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by the President.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Gibbs, Levin, Noetzel, Thompson,* Varni, Wilkerson. (9)

Absent: Commissioners R. Wong and D. Wong (excused, calendar conflict), V. Cauley, J. Guglielmoni, C. Gruwell. (ALL 3, un-notified). **NOTE: Total of FIVE Sitting Commissioners Absent;** plus one recently RETIRED (Comm. Reni Champagne).

Attending Guests: Mr. Charles Reed, Mr. Roger Dong, Mr. James Small, Mr. Eduardo Ramirez, and (scheduled) **Guest Speakers**, Ms. Cheryl Cook, and Mr. Richard P. Stage

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

A previously distributed AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Agenda**, as written (M. Levin; 2nd-Alfidi) **passed without exception.**

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes of 11/8/10, 12/6/10 and 2/7/11 VAC meetings.

Past-Secretary **Dara Wong** had provided notice that she would be absent for this meeting. In an effort to finally resolve outstanding issues for Minutes of previous meetings, Sec'y. Noetzel distributes copies of **Minutes VAC meeting of November 8, 2010**. This **DRAFT** includes corrections that were mandated at earlier meetings and never accomplished. After some discussion **Comm. LEVIN makes MOTION (2nd Comm. Caldera) to APPROVE the 11/8/10 Minutes** with one final correction (i.e. Comm. Caldera correction re: 'Ohlone Nation'). Motion is passed without exception. **November 2010 Minutes are Official.** At this point the still unresolved Minutes for the **December 6, 2010** meeting were taken up. Past Sec'y Dara Wong could not submit the Minutes for review (as she was absent), so the Matter of the December 2010 Minutes was once again tabled for action at the next VAC meeting. At this point a previously distributed copy of the **Draft Minutes (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) for the February 7, 2011** meeting was reviewed. Comm. Caldera offered two minor corrections to the Draft and after noting corrections for incorporation into a final version, Comm. Levin offered a **MOTION to accept Minutes** as amended (2nd-Caldera). The Motion **passed without exception** and the Minutes for the VAC Meeting of 2/7/11 are approved.

Agenda Item 5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comm. Noetzel once again introduced his guest to the meeting, **MR. JAMES SMALL**, a recent veteran and current student at City College. Mr. Small is interested in serving on this Commission, and is currently seeking a Mayoral Appointment. **Comm. Levin** introduced his guest, **MR. EDUARDO RAMIREZ**, a USAF career veteran who now works at the VA facility @ Ft. Miley. Mr. Ramirez then commented on his background and also expressed his interest in serving on the Commission. He stated that his 22-year USAF career took him to many places worldwide, including the first Gulf War. After retirement he worked at the Dept. of Labor, and for the past 2 years at Ft. Miley VA Medical Center where he has recently been appointed as the Minority Veterans Program Coordinator.

Comm. Levin then introduced our first 'Agenda Scheduled' guest, **Ms. CHERYL COOK**, Program Supervisor at the **County Veterans Service Office (CVSO)**. Ms. Cook provided background and update information on the services and facilities of the County Veterans Service Office. She spoke of the family assistance services of her office to County Jail inmates at the new 'veterans pod', as well as outreach services at City College where she was instrumental in development of the new Veterans Service Office on that campus. She also spoke of the CVSO presence at San Francisco State University and of their new outreach office at Ft. Miley. Ms. Cook explained her initiative to preserve funding for her offices on the basis of its cost-saving aspects. That is, every veteran they guide to a Federal or State program represents one less individual burden on City public assistance programs. She asked for support (from the VAC) to advocate for retention of funding for CVSO programs when new budgets are developed. At the close of her 15-minute presentation, **Comm. Levin** suggests an initiative for further support of CVSO programs by development of a letter (from the VAC) to City Government, expressing our strong support for retention of all CVSO programs and funding. He requests an AGENDA item to that effect, be included for the April VAC meeting.

President Varni then introduces our second 'Agenda Scheduled' guest, **MR. RICHARD (Phil) STAGE**, Northern CA Manager of the **MPSC (Military Personnel Services Corporation)** and an adjunct organization, the **ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve)**. Mr. Stage explained his dual role as a **DOD Contractor**, working with the MPSC and its Armed Forces Employer Partnership program, (a service that connects veterans and reservists seeking jobs with potential employers), and as a representative for ESGR (essentially an ombudsman service dedicated to resolution of issues with respect to employment of veterans and reservists). Mr. Stage stated that unemployment rate for Armed Forces Reservists is now at 18% and similar for veterans. He is holding over 500 Resumé's from Reservists and veterans seeking career oriented jobs from his list of some 30,000 potential employers in his (northern CA) Region. He states that he has a high success rate in 'signing-up' employers in rural and suburban areas, (partnering with some 1400 employers, to date), but little success in San Francisco and other urban areas, with employers like: City of S.F.; Police Dept., Fire Dept., Sheriff's office and other Human Resources Departments of the 600 major employers in S.F., despite the fact that the (Federal) Uniformed Services Employment Rights Act. (USERA) mandates opportunity for re-hiring when a veteran or reservist returns from a tour of active duty, and despite the fact that there is no fee for use of their Website search engine (at www.employerpartnership.org) to match employers w/ job seekers. At the end of his 20-minute presentation, **Comm. Levin** asked how the VAC could participate and assist in fostering better participation from

City agencies and employers. He suggested, for example, that Mr. Stage might contact Greg Corrales (Captain of the Mission Police Station and also a veteran and active member of the American Legion. Finally, **President Varni suggested further continuing coordination (between the enterprises of Mr. Stage and the VAC)**, in the overall effort to find jobs for San Francisco veterans.

President Varni then introduced **guest Roger Dong** who announced a **recent breakthrough with the War Memorial Building Board of Trustees** with regard to opening (for the first time) office space on the 3rd floor (specifically, Room 336) for **potential use as a VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER**, for workshop opportunities and services (by Veterans Service Organizations, like the CVSO). Mr. Dong and members of the **War Memorial Building Commission** have also acquired commitments for donated furniture, computers and other resources to facilitate development of new veterans facilities on the Third floor.

Agenda item 6 – Officers Reports

B – Vice Presidents Report. Comm. R. Wong absent (see above).

C – Secretary's Report, Comm. S. Noetzel deferred his report until **Agenda Items 7 and 8.**

A – Presidents Report. President Varni read a recent Email from Commissioner Reni Champagne, announcing that due to ongoing health issues, he will unfortunately **NOT be seeking re-appointment to the VAC.** He, and others expressed great appreciation for the many years of outstanding service to the Commission by Commissioner Champagne.

President Varni then introduced and read a **SECOND** email he has recently received, this one from the San Francisco Republican Assembly. Key points covered in his reading of the lengthy Email are as follows:

In early March, the **San Francisco Republican Assembly (SFRA)** sent out invitations for its 3/23 dinner. The Dinner Program included presentation of an **AWARD and CONTRIBUTION to America Legion Post 911**, as the **2010 Outstanding Post** for its service to returning veterans. Shortly thereafter the **SFRA** received an email from the War Memorial Commission stating that Post 911 and members of its leadership faced various charges and therefore the **S.F. Republican Assembly** should **RECONSIDER** said award and contribution. In response the **SFRA** requested an official document delineating all such charges, and the Commission members who approved them. To date, **SFRA** has received only a reprint of an original email on Commission Letterhead. Therefore the Republican Assembly has contacted the Judge Advocate of Post 911 (Col. William D. Hyde, Ret.) for an immediate report on the background of these charges.

Pres. Varni said there were additional attachments to the email, however his primary question was how was it possible that anyone on the VAC was sending out information on Commission Letterhead, with regard to this issue.

At this point (approximately 7:35pm) Commissioner Thompson left the meeting as previously announced.

Comm. Alfidi responded to President Varni's question, stating that the reference might be to Commissioner Alfidi's email, sent to the SFRA (as part of a series of emails on the subject by himself, Nelson Lum and John Forette on the subject). Comm. Alfidi stated that the 'letterhead document' referenced was likely a copy of the official VAC letter, hand delivered on 12/15/10 (by past Sec'y Dara Wong) to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, wherein the VAC expressed our concern with regard to specific allegations of fraud and misconduct by former Post 911 Commander Michael Gerold, and requesting an official investigation of such charges.

Guest Roger Dong then volunteered that the War Memorial Commission **ALSO** was in communication with the **SF Republican Assembly** on this issue, and it may be unclear exactly what correspondence the SFRA email was referring to.

At this point Comm. Alfidi requested a copy of the subject email from SFRA, and requested further discussion on the matter when Agenda item 8E was taken up.

Agenda item 7 – Review of Mandated Corrections to 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Comm. Noetzel distributes copies of DRAFT #3 of the **VAC ANNUAL REPORT for 2010**. He explains that this (latest) **DRAFT of the REPORT**, includes corrections, as mandated by vote in the VAC meeting of 2/7/11; to wit: the deletion of specific NAMES of Commissioners who participated (individually) in projects and events beneficial to veterans during the past year, while still **RETAINING** descriptions of said events. After his review, Sec'y Noetzel asked for further comments or a **MOTION** to accept the **2010 ANNUAL REPORT** as amended.

At this point, Comm. CALDERA raised a **POINT OF ORDER**. He pointed out that since Commissioner Thompson had left the meeting, the Commission was now in deliberation while one member **SHORT** of a **QUORUM**. He further stated that any business transacted from this point forward was likely invalid, and therefore **MOVED** for immediate **ADJOURNMENT**.

Comm. Levin pointed out that a lack of Quorum prohibits only the transaction of Official Business, but that additional Agenda Items could be discussed, so long as no **VOTE** was taken. Without a **SECOND** to Comm. Caldera's Motion to Adjourn, the meeting continued for another five minutes of unofficial (and unreported) business. The meeting was discontinued (without official Adjournment) at approximately 8:00pm.

Note: Minutes of the 3/7/11 VAC Meeting approved by unanimous vote at VAC Meeting of 4/4/11

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104 MAR 31 2011

Monday, APRIL 4, 2011

MEETING AGENDA

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NOTE: Acting President (and current V.P.) Raymond Wong, Presiding

03-31-11P03:35 RC/0

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of Previous Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

Note: Review of Comm. D. Wong's Minutes for Meeting of December 6, 2010.

Secretary Noetzel to present DRAFT Minutes for meeting of March 8, 2011.

5. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).*

6. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report. Acting President Raymond Wong to address the Commission.
- B. Vice President's Report; VP R. Wong to report.
- C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel will report on status of Board of Supervisors and Mayoral appointments to the VAC, and distribute updated CURRENT COMMISSIONERS contact list.

7. REVIEW and approval of mandated corrections to 2010 ANNUAL REPORT.

8. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

- A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead)
- B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
- C. HOMELESS Veterans. Comm.
- D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. WONG lead. Also, Comm. NOETZEL to seek vote of approval for his proposed RESOLUTION in support of HR Bill #210, titled: Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011
- E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS. F. VETERANS PROJECTS. Comm. NOETZEL, (Lead), to report on development progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
- G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Update on current status of negotiations with Board of Trust with respect to apportionment of building space for VETERAN related use.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Comm. ALFIDI to report on the 2/10/11 American Legion internal TRIAL of former A.L. District 8 Commander Michael Gerold, and the impact and implications of his conviction and expulsion from the Legion. Discussion to include possible further VAC action.
- B. VAC request for support of City of S.F. Government for adequate funding for County Veterans Service Office programs, as suggested by Comm. Levin at previous meeting.

9. NEW BUSINESS: Discussion and development of a Succession Plan to re-establish permanent VAC President and Officers.

11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

12. ADJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at:

Stephen Noetzel, Secretary, at email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of April 4, 2011

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC Acting President Ray Wong at 6:18pm. The meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance, led by the Acting President.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Baldonado, Caldera, Cauley, Gibbs, Noetzel, Ramirez, Wilkerson, D. Wong & R. Wong. (9)

Absent: Commissioners Alfidi, Guglielmoni, Levin, & Thompson (all 4 excused, calendar conflict), as well as Comm. C. Gruwell. (un-notified absence)

Attending Guests: Ms. Alex Critchlow, Mr. Roger Dong, Mr. Thomas Scammell, & Mr. Robert Varni, plus City Attorney representative Wayne Snodgrass.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

A previously distributed AGENDA was reviewed. MOTION to accept Agenda, as written (Comm. Cauley, 2nd Comm. Gibbs) passed without exception.

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes of 12/6/10 and 3/7/11 VAC meetings.

Minutes for the 12/6/10 meeting (written by Past-Secretary Dara Wong) were distributed and reviewed. Comm. Cauley moved to accept the amended Minutes (2nd Comm. Caldera). The Motion passed and the Minutes for the VAC Meeting of 12/6/10 are now approved.

At this point a previously distributed copy of the Draft Minutes (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) for the March 7, 2011 meeting was reviewed. Comm. Cauley offered a MOTION to accept Minutes as written (2nd Comm. Wilkinson). The Motion passed without exception and the Minutes for the VAC Meeting of 3/7/11 are approved.

Agenda Item 5 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Alex Critchlow introduced herself and the Personal Health and Fitness program that she works with. She confirmed that she is also a Veteran as well as a city resident. She was warmly encouraged to consider making application for a seat on the Commission.

Mr. Thomas Scammell introduced himself. He too is a (Navy) veteran and attending as a guest of Comm. Cauley.

Mr. Roger Dong (President of the War Memorial Building Commission) addressed the group to give an update on negotiations with the building Board of Trust (BOT) regarding building use plans. Such plans include the establishment of a permanent Veterans Resource Center for San Francisco Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), and a potential "Small Business Incubation lab" to develop Veteran owned new businesses ventures. His Commission is meeting with the BOT soon for further negotiations.

Mr. Robert Varni (Recent VAC President, now retired) then addressed the Commission. He explained that he is now deeply involved with numerous other pursuits, and that is why, (when offered a Mayoral appointed Commission seat), he deferred to younger candidates who might bring new energy and commitment to the VAC. He then introduced a letter he received from Retired General Paul Monroe who runs a national organization called OPERATION FREE, purported to be established to assist veterans in a variety of pursuits. Mr. Varni also asked the Commission to seek to establish a City Proclamation to honor long-term (former) commissioner RENIE CHAMPAGNE for his long and dedicated service to veterans. Finally, he thanked the Commission for their support and dedication during his 4-year tenure.

Agenda Item 6 – Officers Reports

A – Presidents Report. Acting President Raymond Wong began by welcoming (new) Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez into the VAC, and asked him to re-introduce himself to the group. Comm. Ramirez then reviewed his own background, including career service in the USAF and his participation in the First Gulf War. He explained that after retirement from active duty he worked at the Department of Labor, and finally attained his current position at the VA facility at Ft. Miles where he serves as the Minority Veterans Programs Coordinator (among other responsibilities). Commission members then offered a warm 'Welcome Aboard' to new Commissioner Ramirez.

Commissioner Wong also reported on his recent visit to Washington D.C. as a part of the VFW National Legislative Action Team. He reported that he heard VA Sec'y. Shinseki speak on elimination of homelessness in the Veterans Community. A discussion on the problem ensued. Comm. Noetzel spoke of the success of the comprehensive model of the SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES work in this area, and urged pressure on the VA to use a similar FULL SOCIAL SERVICES approach when dealing with veterans' homeless issues. Comm. Gibbs confirmed the need for a Comprehensive approach, citing her recent experience, serving as an Intake Volunteer at the recent Project Veterans Connect, #38 in an ongoing series!

At this point (approx. 7:20pm), Comm. Gibbs warned that he would have to leave the meeting at 7:30pm. It was pointed out that in so doing we would lose Quorum and be forced to adjourn. He said he would stay as long as possible.

B – VICE Presidents Report.

Vice President Raymond Wong reported that at the end of March, he and Comm. Dara Wong attended the WELCOME HOME VETANAM VETERANS DAY at the State Capital. Both reported that it was a successful event.

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Comm. Noetzel then suggested that the Chair move directly to Agenda Item #7. Chairman Wong agreed.

Agenda Item 7 – REVIEW and approval of mandated corrections to 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Comm. Noetzel distributed copies of the latest DRAFT of the 2010 VAC ANNUAL REPORT as amended by earlier vote. The amendments were quickly reviewed with general approval. Comm. Cauley made a Motion to Accept the REPORT as amended. (Comm. Caldera 2nd). The Motion passed unanimously and the 2010 ANNUAL REPORT of the VAC is now officially approved. Sec'y Noetzel will see to it that it is properly distributed to the City Administration.

Agenda item 8 – REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead).

Comm. Wilkerson reported. He announced that the 20th Annual Dept. of Veterans Affairs JOBS FAIR will be hosted by the University of Phoenix.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Cauley reported on an event that she is developing a TOWN HALL event for area veterans, for discussions on how best to move forward with implementation of the (new) policies with respect to recent rescission of the DOD "Don't Ask; Don't Tell" policies. Subjects to be included will include professional advice to LGBT Veterans who may have "Bad Paper" discharges over this issue, as well as veterans who may seek to re-enlist. Comm. Cauley reports that she has the support of State Sen. Mark Leno for this TOWN HALL MEETING concept, and asks for help in contacting Building Administration personnel who she can work with to nail down time, date, and place for the event. Members of the Commission committed to helping her find the right people to schedule the event.

Comm. Caldera also reported on this subject, and introduced another event, passing out flyers for a MAY 1 event, hosted by American Legion Post 315, on the subject of SUICIDE PREVENTION in the Veterans' community. Caldera cited new statistics on the growing problem of suicide in the Veterans' community. The Community Forum will feature guest speaker Mark Stalnaker, Ph.D. Staff Psychologist and Suicide Prevention Coordinator at the SF VA Medical Center. Comm. Requested the support of the Commission with regard to this event. After some discussion it was decided that the event would be publicized in the VAC website. The Secretary agreed to initiate a Website Posting of the subject event.

C. HOMELESS Veterans. (Covered in discussion at item 6A, above)

D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. (Covered in discussion at item 6A, above).

Due to the Time Constraints imposed by an impending Loss of Quorum, the Chair then moved directly to Agenda Item 10.

Agenda item 10. - NEW BUSINESS: Discussion and development of a Succession Plan to re-establish permanent VAC President and Officers.

Comm. Noetzel then offered a WRITTEN MOTION that he has developed as a Succession Plan for nominations and election of a new VAC President under our existing situation (which is not covered under our existing Bylaws).

Comm. Cauley moved to SECOND the written Motion, however at that point the Representative of the City Attorney's office (Mr. Snodgrass) interjected that such a Motion would be improper as the Agenda does not indicate that there might be a MOTION to VOTE on a Succession Plan. After some discussion, the matter was TABLED until the next meeting when the Agenda would include such a statement. Comm. Caldera asked Mr. Snodgrass how we could insure that the matter would be resolved at the next meeting, including an election. Mr. Snodgrass then provided a suggestion that the May meeting Agenda might include: ".....Action Item: Discussion to adopt a Succession Plan to fill the vacant position of Commission President, with intent to hold nominations and an Elections under adopted Plan."

After further discussion it was the consensus of the Commission that an amended Succession Plan be presented as a primary Agenda Item at the May meeting, including provisions for Nomination and Voting to establish a new President (to serve out the remainder of the current term) at that meeting.

At this point, before adjournment, Comm. Noetzel suggested that we consider one more item, that being, Agenda Item 8d.

Agenda item 8 - REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. NOETZEL to seek vote of approval for his proposed RESOLUTION in support of HR Bill #210, titled: Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011.

Comm. Noetzel distributed copies of his DRAFT RESOLUTION on the subject matter, reminding the Commission that they had reviewed and considered this document at the previous meeting but were unable to move forward on it due to Loss of Quorum. After additional discussion on the RESOLUTION, Comm. Baldinado made a Motion that the Commission ADOPT this RESOLUTION, as written. Comm. Cauley Seconded, and a vote was held. The vote passed (with one abstention), and therefore the RESOLUTION in support of HR Bill #210, titled: Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011 is now an official VAC policy and document, and as such Secretary Noetzel will insure that it is forwarded to the City Administration for their support and further action.

At this point, after additional miscellaneous discussion Commissioner Gibbs had to leave the meeting. Facing a Loss of Quorum, the Chair moved directly to....

Agenda Item 11 – Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

After Moment of Silence observance, the meeting was AJORNED at 7:36pm

Note: Minutes of the 4/4/11 VAC Meeting approved by unanimous vote at VAC Meeting of 6/6/11

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission

APR 27 2011

RESOLUTION....

In support of Rep. Speier HR210: Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011

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Whereas a significant number of Filipino nationals (estimated to be somewhere between 250k and 750k) served in support of US combat operations in the Pacific Theatre during World War Two, and

Whereas such service is universally recognized as an important contribution to our eventual victory over Axis forces in the Pacific during that conflict, and many promises were made to both soldiers and civilians, in return for their support of our war effort at the time, and

Whereas such promises included recognition of the military service of Filipinos, including, but not limited to the 'Philippine Scouts', and the Philippine Commonwealth Army, under direct command of the US Military, to be recognized as fully eligible for benefits identical to members of the US military at the time, and

Whereas in 1946, in inexplicable contradiction to the granting of some form of benefits for veterans of the sixty-six other allies who supported our WWII military efforts, the US Congress Passed the Rescission Act, which effectively reneged on its promises, and stripped Filipino veterans of benefits, and

Whereas Government tracking figures indicate that there are currently less than 50,000 surviving Filipino veterans of WWII service, and some 10,000 of those currently reside in the US; most of whom have long since attained US citizenship, and

Whereas despite the fact that the US Government, has (as part of the Economic Stimulus Legislation of 2010) initiated payment of some benefits to qualifying Filipino veterans, a significant number of such veterans are denied benefits simply because they are not in possession of Official Discharge documents from the US military, and

Whereas US Representative Jackie Speier (of San Mateo) has recently introduced a new Bill (HR210) that goes a long way toward bringing justice to this righteous cause, and despite the obvious fact that 'time is running out' for those affected, there are still a number of Filipino Veterans of service who currently reside in San Francisco, and who could potentially be benefited by passage of this legislation, and

Whereas Congresswoman Speier's legislation (Titled the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2011), is unique in that it does not introduce a whole new Schedule of Benefits for Filipino veterans, but rather simply offers amendment to the existing VA schedule of benefits to direct the Secretary of the Veterans Administration to "....take into account any alternative relevant documents regarding the service (of Filipino veterans).".

Therefore be it Resolved, that the VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION, of the City and county of San Francisco fully endorses and urges the passage of said legislation, in an effort to bring, at long last, some measure of justice to our Filipino comrades in arms, who fought so valiantly, in common cause with us, in the Great Second War.

Be it Further Resolved, that in its advisory capacity, the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission hereby advises and requests that the City Government of San Francisco use all possible influence to urge and support passage of this important legislation.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, MAY 2, 2011
MEETING AGENDA

NOTE: Acting President (and current V.P.) Raymond Wong, Presiding

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of Previous Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
5. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).*
6. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and development of a Succession Plan, to fill the vacant position of Commission President, with intent to hold nominations and an Elections under adopted Plan.

Note: Hopefully, after this item, the newly elected Commission President will preside over the balance of the meeting

7. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report.
- B. Vice President's Report; VP R. Wong to report.
- C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel will report on status of Board of Supervisors and Mayoral appointments to the VAC, and distribute updated CURRENT COMMISSIONERS contact list.

8. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

- A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead)
- B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
- C. HOMELESS Veterans. Comm.
- D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. WONG lead.
- E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS.
- F. VETERANS PROJECTS. Comm. NOETZEL, (Lead), to report on development progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
- G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Update on current status of negotiations with Board of Trust with respect to apportionment of building space for VETERAN related use.

9. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Comm. ALFIDI to report on the 2/10/11 American Legion internal TRIAL of former A.L. District 8 Commander Michael Gerold, and the impact and implications of his conviction and expulsion from the Legion. Discussion to include possible further VAC action.
- B. ACTION ITEM: VAC request for support of City of S.F. Government for adequate funding for County Veterans Service Office programs, as suggested by Comm. Levin at April meeting (including potential VOTE on Resolution of Support).

10. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

11. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at:

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 2, 2011

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC Acting President Ray Wong at 6:18pm. The meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance, led by the Acting President.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Cauley, Levin, Noetzel, Ramirez, Thompson, Wilkerson, D. Wong & R. Wong. (11)
Absent: Commissioners, Gibbs, (calendar conflict) Comm. Guglielmoni, (medical issues), as well as Comm. C. Gruwell. (un-notified absence)

Attending Guests: Lt. Col. (Ret.) Ms. Lilly Chin, Mr. Roger Dong, Mr. Keith Boylan, Mr. Charles Reed, Mr. Jordan Towers, and City Attorney representative Wayne Snodgrass.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

The Meeting AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Agenda**, as written (Comm. Caldera, 2nd Comm. Baldonado) passed without exception.

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Minutes of April 4, 2011 VAC meeting.

A copy of the Draft Minutes of the April VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) was reviewed. Comm. Caldera offered a **MOTION to accept Minutes** as written (2nd Comm. Wilkinson). Comm. Levin then offered a **Motion to TABLE** consideration of the April Minutes due to the fact that the City Mailroom had failed to mail out 'hard copy' to individual Commissioners and there was **insufficient time for review**. After brief discussion, a **VOTE was held** and the **Motion to Table prevailed**. Consideration of the 4/4/11 Meeting Minutes will be on the Agenda for the June VAC meeting.

Agenda Item 5 - PUBLIC COMMENT

Comm. Ray Wong introduced his guest, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Ms. Lilly Chin. Ms. Chin addressed the group and spoke of her career in the US Army as a nurse at Letterman Hospital and other posts. She announced that she is a resident of San Francisco, and is interested in appointment to the VAC...if other candidates are not available.

Commissioner Roger Dong, President of the SF War Memorial Building Commission (WMC) reported on the current status of negotiations between the WMC and the Board of Trustees (BoT) regarding Building Use Plans both currently and after the planned building Retrofit. He provided info on a **WMC proposal to establish a Veterans Resource Center (in Room 219) to be installed as soon as possible** for the benefit of local veterans. Some \$50k has been raised to establish the Resource Center, along with donations of furniture, computers and other electronic equipment. He reported that **despite the support of at least six (6) members of the S.F. Board of Supervisors, the BoT rejected the proposal on first reading**. The Resource Center will again be considered at the 5/12 meeting. Comm. Dong asked that the original Letter of Support for WMC Building Plans (that went to former mayor Newsome in December of 2010), **now be Re-Sent to current Mayor Lee, with an addendum to include info on the planned Resource Center**. City Attorney Snodgrass then offered an opinion that the discussion was now "Off Agenda". He suggested that if the original Letter to Mayor was intended for both the retiring and incoming Mayor, it might be appropriate to re-send the original letter to Mayor Lee. Secretary Noetzel will follow up.

Meeting guest, Mr. Keith Boylan introduced himself. He spoke of his (Gulf War 1) military service and his advocacy for veterans rights/benefits since his discharge, including his current position as a Program Director at Swords to Plowshares. He mentioned that he is interested in a commission appointment (at the VAC). He also mentioned that he is not, at this time, a resident of San Francisco.

Meeting Guest Mr. Jordan Towers introduced himself. He spoke of his service in the Marine Corps, including a tour of duty in the current Iraq war. He spoke of his advocacy for student vets in particular including co-founding of the Student Veterans Alliance program at City College. Mr. Towers is currently employed at Swords to Plowshares. He mentioned that he is interested in a commission appointment (at the VAC), and that he resides within the City of San Francisco.

Agenda Item 6 – ACTION ITEM: Discussion and Vote on Succession Plan for Commission Presidency.

Acting President Ray Wong opened the discussion by referencing the revised 15-point Succession Plan authored by Sec'y Noetzel. Sec'y Noetzel again apologized for lack of opportunity for advance study of his modified Succession Plan (due to the City Mailroom failure to send out our mailing this month). He explained that it was similar to the one we discussed last month, the primary change being a provision to enable both nominations and a vote to elect an Interim President at this meeting, and offered it as his **MOTION for adoption**. Comm. Ramirez raised a Point of Order in reference to the Election Procedure currently defined in the Commission Bylaws. He asked if adoption of the suggested Succession Plan would represent a change in the commission Bylaws. Sec'y Noetzel explained that the Election Procedures enumerated in the Bylaws are in reference to our annual Election of Officers held each December/January, to establish new Officers for the new calendar year. He further explained that there were no provisions in the Bylaws to address this rare situation of replacing a President who has left office during his Term of Office. He also explained that adoption of a Succession Plan was valid for resolution of the current

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situation only, and as such they represent no change whatsoever to the current commission Bylaws. City Attorney Snodgrass then asked for further clarification; asking if we found ourselves in this position again (in the future), would the Minutes for Succession Plan rules we adopted tonight, hold as binding precedent? Sec'y Noetzel replied that they would not, indicating that the current Succession Plan is for the current situation only, and that new rules would have to be again adopted if a similar 'mid-term vacancy' were to occur in the future. Comm. Caldera commented that the current Succession Plan was offered as an Agenda Action Item (under the current Agenda) at the suggestion of City Attorney who had pointed out our failure to meet the Public Notice requirement in the previous meeting. Comm. Levin then asked for adequate time to consider the Succession Plan, and made a MOTION that we table this item until the next VAC meeting. Sec'y Noetzel raised a Point of Order to indicate that there is already a motion on the floor (i.e. the 15-Point Succession Plan). Comm. Caldera pointed out that discussion heretofore was inappropriate as there had been no SECOND to ANY motion. He offered a belated SECOND to Sec'y Noetzel's motion on the Succession Plan. Comm. Wilkerson then offered a belated SECOND to Comm. Levin's motion to table. Acting Pres. Wong asked the City Attorney for a ruling on how to proceed. Mr. Snodgrass offered that Roberts Rules suggest that a vote on the last motion should be taken first. After further discussion, Acting Pres. Wong called the question and a vote on the (Levin) TABLING motion was held. The motion FAILED with a vote of FOUR in favor, FIVE against, One abstention. At that point discussion continued on adoption of the Succession Plan. After further discussion, Acting Pres. Wong called the question and a vote on acceptance of the Succession Plan was held. The motion PASSED with a vote of FIVE in favor, FOUR opposed, One abstention. The current Succession Plan was adopted. At this point, Acting Pres. Wong initiated the Succession Plan with a call for opened NOMINATIONS for the office of Interim President. Comm. Thompson nominated Comm. Ray Wong, (2nd by Comm. Wilkerson) who immediately accepted the Nomination. Sec'y Noetzel nominated Comm. John Caldera, (2nd by Comm. Ramirez) who immediately accepted the Nomination. Acting Pres. Wong then called (thrice) for additional nominations. Hearing none, the Nominations were closed and Ballots were prepared, with an Indication to vote for either of the two nominated candidates. While BALLOTS were distributed, both candidates for Interim President were afforded time to present their Plan for leadership of the VAC for the balance of the year. On completion of the Statements, Commissioners voted by marking their Ballots. The Ballots were then collected and tabulated by (guest) Charles Reed, with verification by Comm. Cauley. The Vote Tally was announced as follows: SIX (6) votes for Comm. WONG; FOUR votes for Comm. Caldera; ONE Abstention. Under the Succession Plan adopted, NEITHER candidate attained the required plurality of nine (9) votes to succeed as Interim President. In moving forward, Sec'y Noetzel offered a Motion to amend the Succession Plan to allow for a Simple Majority (vote) to elect an Interim President. City Attorney Snodgrass then interjected that since changes to the draft Succession Plan were not indicated on the Meeting Agenda, he would deem it inappropriate to proceed in this manner at this time. After some discussion the Commission agreed to end continuing effort to establish an Interim President at this time, and continue with the balance of the Meeting Agenda, as led by Acting President Wong.

Agenda item 7 - Officers Reports

A - Presidents Report. Acting President Raymond Wong reported that he and Comm. Dara Wong recently attended the funeral of Marine Lance Corporal Harry Liu at the San Bruno National Cemetery. Cpl. Liu died in service to his nation in the current middle east conflict(s) and the surviving family was thankful for the participation of a variety of members representing various Veterans Service Organizations.

B - VICE Presidents Report.

Vice President Raymond Wong stated that the above report represented his "VP Report" as well.

C - Secretary's Report.

Sec'y. Noetzel began his Report by distributing copies of a current ROSTER of the VAC, including new information on inclusive dates of commission appointment terms and full contact information. He reported on the new Commissions & Council's Database that the City has initiated. It will include important data on well over 100 distinct City of S.F. Commissions and Council's with a primary intent of providing a usable tool to inform the public of what Commission Term Expirations are imminent, and requirements for greater citizen participation. Sec'y Noetzel reported on the 4-hour Training Session he attended (along with Secretaries of numerous other Commissions) to prepare for launch of the program. In reviewing the Roster document, several commissioners offered corrective or updated information. Sec'y Noetzel provided a quick review of his communications with the Mayor's Office, indicating that they are interviewing candidates for the currently opened commission seats, who are competent, committed, and fully prepared to represent the full diversity of the Veterans community of San Francisco.

Agenda Item 8 – REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead).

Comm. Wilkerson announced that at this point there are at least 23 potential Employers registered for participation at the 5/11/11 Dept. of Veterans Affairs JOBS FAIR (hosted by the University of Phoenix in San Francisco). Comm. Ramirez announced that (at the JOB FAIR) he will be presenting a seminar titled: How to Get a Better Job In the Federal Government.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Cauley reported on some problems she has experienced in generating broad support for a TOWN HALL event for area veterans, to examine **how best to move forward** with implementation of the (new) policies with respect to recent rescission of the DOD “Don’t Ask; Don’t Tell” policies. She is working with local publications (Bay Area Reporter, etc.) to get publicity and community support for the concept. Several ideas for generating such support were discussed. Comm. Cauley will continue to press forward to launch this **important TOWN HALL project**.

Comm. Caldera reported on a MAY 1 Community Forum event, hosted by American Legion Post 315, on the subject of **VETERAN’S SUICIDE and SUICIDE PREVENTION** in the Veterans’ community. Comm. Caldera reported that **guest speakers Mark Stalnaker (Ph.D, Staff Psychologist and Suicide Prevention**

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 2, 2011 (Page 3 of 4)

Coordinator at the SF VA Medical Center.) and author Aaron Gantz provided alarming new information and statistics on the **growing problem of suicide** in the Veterans’ community; including the “**Hidden Loss**” of many additional untimely Veterans deaths due to substance abuse; homelessness and an inordinately high accident rate. He reported that the **Help for Veterans HOTLINE, at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)** is an effective resource tool for troubled veterans, as over 200,000 calls were logged last year! At the end of the event, **guest speakers Stalnaker and Gantz** were presented with **CERTIFICATES OF COMMENDATION**, issued by Supervisor **ROSS MIRKARIMI**, for their outstanding work in the area of suicide prevention.

C. HOMELESS Veterans.

Acting Pres. Wong reported that his recent Email to the Commission, which covered the **Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Position Paper** on many important Veteran’s issues, including that of the very serious problem of **Homeless veterans**.

D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. (No new report).

E. National Veterans Groups.

Comm. Caldera reported that as Commander of A.L. Post 315, he received an Award (from the National American Legion Hq) commending Post 315 for attainment of the 100-member threshold.

F. Veterans Projects.

Sec’y Noetzel reported on new developments regarding our **Resolution In Support of the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act (passed by the VAC last month)**. Noetzel reported that after receiving a letter transmitting our Resolution to the Mayor, he received a call from the Mayor’s Director of Legislation (Mr. Jason Elliott) who **expressed the Mayor’s FULL SUPPORT** for the Resolution. Mr. Elliott advised us to contact the Board of Supervisors to initiate a City of San Francisco “Mirror Resolution” to underline and further advance our support for this important legislation. **Comm. Baldinado** rose to thank the entire Commission for supporting this cause.

Sec’y Noetzel also reported the Mr. Elliott **expressed Interest in our Research Initiative** to learn what commitment to the hiring of Veterans can be garnered from the largest San Francisco based Corporations. He asked that we keep him apprised of progress in this effort as the City may, at some point, like to ‘partner’ with the VAC in this effort.

G. War Memorial Veterans Building. (Largely covered in Paragraph 2, Agenda item 5, above, however...) at this point Comm. Levin reiterated that the **original (12/6/10) VAC Letter of Support for the WMC Building Plans** now be **Re-Sent** (by the Secretary) to Mayor Edwin Lee. The Secretary agreed to follow through.

Agenda Item 9 – Old Business

A. REPORT on TRIAL of (former) A.L. District 8 Leadership.

Comm. ALFIDI reported on results of the 2/10/11 American Legion internal trial. He recounted results as follows:

- **Former A.L. District 8 Commander Michael Gerold**, was convicted on 3 (of 5) counts of gross misconduct and recommended that he be **EXPULLED** from the American Legion.
- **Matt Shea** was convicted on **ONE** count, as a responsible co-conspirator. **A REPRIMAND** was recommended.
- **Additional persons** charged were **CLEARED** of any charges.

In concluding his report, **Comm. Alfidi** confirmed that he has followed through on the recommendations of the Commission and **forwarded** a copy of our January Letter to the City Administration (requesting a review of the conduct of Michael Gerold for potential infractions of State or Local laws), to the office of the new District Attorney (Gascon).

B. ACTION ITEM: Support adequate funding for County Veterans Service Office programs.

Comm. Levin reported that in County Veterans Service Supervisor Cheryl Cook is appreciative of the support she has received from the VAC and she is awaiting resolution of the State, County and City budgets with respect to funding of her office and staff. She will call on the VAC for further support if needed, after budgets are finalized, and before funding hearings begin. **Comm. Levin** stressed that the main effort at this time is to **do all possible** to facilitate eventual relocation of the **County Veterans Service Offices Into the Veterans War Memorial Building**, preferably **BEFORE** the planned retrofit shut-down, but most certainly after.

Minutes of Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 2, 2011 – Page 4 of 4.

Misc. Old Business Items:

Comm. Caldera made reference to our **Annual Report** (specifically its reference to) our continuing initiative with respect to pressing for research and development of a **VETERANS COURT**, and requested that since **Comm. Guglielmoni** was (who had led this initiative) was **currently Indisposed** (due to health issues), that **this important issue should not be abandoned**. **Sec'y Noetzel** reported that he recently met with **Comm. Guglielmoni**, and that he is **undergoing major surgery** to repair his knee; but that after recuperation, **he WILL be back to the Commission**, and he is **STILL Interested In the work of the Commission**, including continuation of his own research into this subject. **Sec'y Noetzel** also mentioned that in one of his last acts while in office, former Governor **Schwarzenegger VETOED** a bill (passed by CA Legislators) that would have established a system of **VETERANS COURTS** throughout California. **Comm. D. Wong** then reported that the **Vetoed Bill** is **currently being Re-Introduced** (in the current Legislative session), and that it is presently in Committee, and that some **23 Counties (of 58 California Counties)** support this new Bill, and want to establish **VETERANS COURTS** in their Counties. **Sec'y Noetzel** mentioned that this is a 'dual front' initiative, and that **In addition to State institution of Veteran's Courts, individual COUNTIES** and

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 2, 2011 (Page 4 of 4)

local governments can establish such Courts on their own, as **has already been accomplished in San Diego**. At this point **Guest Jordan Towers** interjected that his employer, **SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES** is currently working with the **City/County of San Francisco** on an initiative to establish a local **Veteran's Court** right here in **S.F.** **Mr. Towers** concluded with a suggestion that the **VAC** might look into partnering with **'Swords'** in this effort. **Comm. Ramirez** then mentioned that he had recently received an **Email** that provided information on all **Veteran's Courts** established or planned within California. The Chair requested that **Comm. Ramirez** forward such information to the Secretary for full dissemination to the Commission, and **Comm. Ramirez** agreed to do so.

Chair's Call for ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. **Comm. Cauley** announced that a **Homeless Connect** event will be held in the **Bayview/ Hunters Point** area on the **10th of June**, and requested **VAC** support and participation.
- b. **Comm. Levin** invited all guests and Commissioners to attend the annual **"Honor & Remember" Memorial day Event** at **Presidio (10:30am to 2:00pm on Monday, May 30, 2011)**. Ceremonies will include live music and an address by **General Myatt**, who will provide an update on the status of the **Design Competition for the War Memorial Courtyard Memorial**, which has now been narrowed to three finalist designs.
- c. **Comm. Cauley** announced that she is included in a **"short film"** called **"THE RESCUE"**. It will play at the **Castro theatre** (with another 'short', at 4pm on **Thursday the 23rd of June**). She invited all to attend. **Guest Jordan Towers** announced that **Swords to Plowshares** will be hosting the **3rd annual "SHOUT"** event on **Thursday, May 5**. This event affords an opportunity for **female veterans** to **speak out** about various aspects of their experiences in the military.
- d. **Comm. Ramirez** announced that the **VA facility at Ft. Miley** (where he works) often hosts **Community Meetings** to solicit **community input for their Master Development Plan**. He asked if he could send such announcements to the Commission, and was encouraged by all to do so.

Agenda Items 10/11 – Honors Report, Moment of Silence, Adjournment

In memory of American Armed Services members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the **Iraq/Afghanistan** conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed service community.

After Moment of Silence observance, the meeting was **AJORNED** at **7:50pm**

*Minutes of the 5/2/11 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and
APPROVED (as amended) at the VAC Meeting of June 6, 2011*

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104 MAY 31 2011

Monday, JUNE 6, 2011
MEETING AGENDA

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NOTE: Acting President (and current V.P.) Raymond Wong, Presiding

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
 - a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 2 April, 2011 and...
 - b. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 2 May, 2011.
5. WELCOME to recently appointed Commissioners.

Mayor LEE has recently made FOUR appointments to fill new terms for Mayoral Appointees to the VAC. As the appointments include the Acting President, Secretary Noetzel will lead official WELCOME BACK to re-appointed Commissioners CHRIS GRUWELL and RAYMOND WONG, and WELCOME ABOARD statements to new Commissioners ALEXANDRA CRICHLAW and AMBER ROSE.
6. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).*
7. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and development of a (simplified) Succession Plan, to fill the vacant position of Interim Commission President, (and any subsequently opened Offices) with intent to hold nominations and Elections under adopted Plan.

Note: Hopefully, after this item, the newly elected Interim Commission President will preside over the balance of the meeting.

8. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report.
- B. Vice President's Report; VP R. Wong to report.
- C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel will report on status of Board of Supervisors and Mayoral appointments to the VAC, and distribute updated CURRENT COMMISSIONERS contact list.

8. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

- A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead, to report on 5/11/11 JOB FAIR, and other).
- B. Veterans HEALTH and WELFARE.
- C. HOMELESS Veterans.
- D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. WONG lead.
- E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS.
- F. VETERANS PROJECTS. Comm. NOETZEL, (Lead), to report on development progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
- G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Update on current status of negotiations with Board of Trust with respect to apportionment of building space for VETERAN related use.

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

12. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at:

Stephen Noetzel, Secretary, at email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the FIRST Monday of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 104 of the War Memorial Veterans Building, at 401 Van Ness Avenue (across from City Hall).

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

DISABILITY ACCESS

The War Memorial Veterans Building (between Grove & McAllister Streets) is wheelchair accessible via front entrance (401 Van Ness). There is wheelchair accessible public parking nearby, including the underground garage at the north side of City Hall. The nearby BART/MUNI station (Civic Center) is wheelchair accessible as are nearby city bus lines and stops. For more Public Transit information services, call 415-923-6142.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of **June 6, 2011**

Agenda item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC Acting President Ray Wong at 6:08pm. The meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by the Acting President.

Agenda item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Gibbs, Levin, Noetzel, Rose, Thompson, Wilkerson, D. Wong & R. Wong. (11)
Absent: Commissioner(s): Alford (**un-notified absence**), Comm. Guglielmoni, (medical issues), Comm. Ramirez (calendar conflict).

Attending Guests: Lt. Col. (Ret.) Mr. Roger Dong, Mr. Charles Reed, Mr. Jordan Towers, Mr. Greg Varga, Mr. Tim Haynes. There was no City Attorney representative present.

Agenda item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

The Meeting AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION to accept Agenda**, as written (Comm. Levin, 2nd Comm. Wilkerson). In Discussion, Comm. Caldera noted that an item for **Commission Goals and Plans** has not been included in this or recent Agenda's. He requested that it be returned in future Agenda's. Discussion ended and the meeting **AGENDA**, as written, was passed without exception.

Agenda item 4 – Review of Minutes of TWO Previous VAC meetings.

The Draft Minutes of the April 4, 2011 VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) were reviewed. Comm. Caldera offered a **MOTION to accept Minutes** as written (2nd. Comm. Thompson). Hearing no discussion a vote was held and the Minutes for the April 4, 2011 VAC Meeting was approved unanimously.

The Draft Minutes of the May 2, 2011 VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) was reviewed. Comm. Wilkerson offered a **MOTION to accept Minutes** as written (2nd. Comm. Caldera). In discussion, Comm. Caldera asked for a minor addition under report on Agenda item 8B; specifically, that Minutes include fact that Supervisor Mirkarimi had provided **CERTIFICATES OF COMMENDATION** for the work of Mark Stalnacker and Aaron Gantz, guest speakers at the 5/1 Suicide Prevention Event hosted by AL Post 315. Comm. Dara Wong also offered some name spelling corrections. Discussion ended, vote was held and the May 2, 2011 Meeting Minutes, (as amended) passed unanimously.

Agenda item 5 – WELCOME to recently appointed Commissioners

Chairman Wong reiterated the fact that Mayor LEE recently made **FOUR** appointments to fill new terms for Mayoral Appointees to the VAC. As the appointments include the Acting President, the Chair asked Secretary Noetzel to lead an official 'welcome back' to re-appointed Commissioners CHRIS GRUWELL and RAYMOND WONG, and **WELCOME ABOARD** introductions to new Commissioners ALEXANDRA CRICHLLOW and AMBER ROSE.

Agenda item 6 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Roger Dong, President of the SF War Memorial Building Commission (WMC) reported that the Building Use Committee of the Board of Trustees (BoT) recently voted unanimous approval for establishment of the **Veterans Resource Center** (in Room 205). It is expected that the full BoT will add their approval of the project at their next meeting, as they have already financed significant electrical and electronic systems upgrades to that space, for use by the Resource Center. Roger asked that the VAC become official Co-Sponsors of the VRC and plan to attend the planned opening in July.

Meeting guest **Mr. Charles Reed** spoke to congratulate the newest members of the Commission and expressed his confidence that they represented added strength to the VAC.

Meeting guest **Mr. Jordan Towers** re-introduced himself, and spoke of his continuing involvement as co-founder of the **Bay Area Alliance of Veterans**, a group of young veterans who are all leaders in various Campus Veterans Clubs at Bay Area Universities, Colleges, and Technical schools. He introduced **Mr. Greg Varga** who is a leader in the new **Veterans Club** at the S.F. Academy of Arts University.

Guest and veteran **Mr. Tim Hayner** introduced himself and informed the Commission of his interest in working with veterans as a potential VAC Commissioner. He informed the Commission on the very positive aspects of a 2-year **Veterans Housing Transitional Program** called **Ralston Place** (on Turk St.) where he currently resides.

Agenda item 7 – ACTION ITEM: Discussion and development of (simplified) Succession Plan to fill vacant position of Interim President.

After introduction of the subject by Chairman Wong, Comm. Levin immediately offered a motion to affirm the results of the **May VAC meeting vote...won by Acting President** and current Vice President Comm. **RAYMOND WONG**, (by simple majority), and to officially install Comm. Wong as President, for the remainder of the 2011 term. Motion seconded by Comm. Gruwell and discussion ensued. Comm. Noetzel recalled that the place we left this issue last month was at a point where the simple majority vote did not meet the "super-majority" criteria that we had approved as the election standard. Comm. Levin re-asserted his current motion and asked for a vote on re-affirmation of the May vote to install Comm. Wong as Interim President of the VAC. Comm. Noetzel advocated for a new election (even if simple Majority is set as criteria) to afford the new Commissioners an opportunity to vote. He also raised the question of the position of

Commission Vice President, (currently held by Comm. Wong), and asked how his elevation to President would affect the office of Vice President. Comm. Noetzel pointed out that there is a Brown Act mandate for Election of Officers to be accomplished via Public Written Ballot. After further discussion it was agreed that the written ballots from the May 2 meeting would stand as the Official Election Record, and that this current vote was merely to AFFIRM and VALIDATE that election. Comm. Gruwell 'called the question', and a Roll Call Vote was held, with the following results:

NINE (9) Commissioners Voting 'AYE': (BALDINADO, CRITCHLOW, GIBBS, GRUWELL, LEVIN, ROSE, THOMPSON, WILKERSON, (Dara) WONG.)

Zero 'NAY' votes

TWO (2) Abstain (CALDERA, NOETZEL)

THREE (3) Excused, Absent (ALFIDI, GUGLIELMONI, RAMIREZ)

ONE (1) Not Voting (Ray WONG)

The Motion to Affirm election of May 2, 2011 carries, and Commissioner **RAYMOND WONG** is officially installed and congratulated as **COMMISSION PRESIDENT** for the balance of the 2011 term.

At this point, Comm. Caldera raised a Point of Order to point out that Commission Bylaws mandate that a **VICE PRESIDENT** be part of the Commission Officers. Comm. Levin stated that he had been informed by City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass that the VAC is under no obligation to elect a Vice President. Comm. Levin then made a motion that we **DO NOT** proceed to resolve the Vice President issue at this time. Comm. Gruwell seconded and discussion ensued. Comm. Caldera reiterated that the VAC Bylaws call for three officers; President, Vice President, and Secretary, and held that without a Vice President, we are in violation of said Bylaws. Comm. Noetzel asked if the issue might be resolved by a vote to affirm Commissioner **WONG** as **BOTH** President and Vice President. Comm. Levin declined to add such a provision into his MOTION. Question was called and a **VOTE** was held on the **LEVIN MOTION**, namely, to **NOT** resolve the Vice President issue at this time. **Eight (8) Commissioners** voted **AYE**, none voted **NAY**, **TWO (2)** abstained. The motion **CARRIED** - there will be no resolution of the issue of Vice President at this time.

Agenda item 8 - Officers Reports

A - Presidents Report. President Raymond Wong reported on yet another successful **MEMORIAL DAY** event at the Presidio. He noted that several of the Commissioners attended the annual Commemoration of the Fallen, as well as Mayor Lee and other elected officials, dignitaries, and Candidates for Office. Pres. Wong congratulated Commissioner Levin for his efforts in organizing and coordinating the event, and Comm. Levin graciously broadened the compliment to all who played a role.

B - Secretary's Report.

Sec'y. Noetzel began his Report by distributing copies of the latest **CONFIDENTIAL ROSTER** of the VAC, including contact information for new Commissioners, etc.

Sec'y. Noetzel also reported on changes/upgrades he has been making to the City **WEBSITE** pages for the VAC. He urged Commissioners to review the website frequently as the changes/upgrades are already resulting in a significant increase in public access to the site.

Sec'y. Noetzel also reported that he has now completed all Commission input for the new City Database on Commissions and Councils, including Term of Office Dates, and information on the two current vacancies.

At close of his Report, the Secretary gathered information from all Commissioners who were in need of new business cards, for production of new cards prior to the next VAC meeting, (8/1/11).

Agenda item 9 - REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

- A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON reported on the success of the 21st annual EDD Dept. of Veterans Affairs **JOBS FAIR**, hosted by the University of Phoenix in San Francisco, on 5/11/11. He reported that some 33 Employers participated, as well as over 402 job seekers, half of whom were veterans. By next meeting, Comm. Thompson will report on how many of the 402 job applicants were actually hired by the attending Vendor Employers.

Sec'y Noetzel also reported on progress on his project to contact the major employers in San Francisco. He informed Commissioners that he has now established an Email dialogue with the Human Resources VP at **CHASE BANK** in an effort to get more detail as to how they intend to follow through on their full-page ad in the SF Chronicle, (3/21/11) where they make public commitment to 'partner' with 10 other firms "in a joint-commitment to hire 100,000 veterans, by the year 2020". Comm. Noetzel again asked that individual Commissioners add their own effort into contacting the major Bay Area corporate employers to inquire as to their Corporate Policies on hiring Veterans. Comm. Gibbs volunteered to participate in the project.

- B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Caldera reported that he recently had opportunity to speak with (new) City District Attorney **GASTONE** and introduced the Commissions interest in the establishment of a **VETERANS COURT** in the city. He further reported that D.A. Gastone was very interested in the concept and promised to look into the issue. Comm. Levin mentioned that **DA Gastone** is currently involved in an election campaign to retain his office, and that regardless of election outcome, the Commission should follow-up with the office of the City D.A. immediately after the November election. He further suggested that Comm. GIBBS might be helpful in this follow-up effort, as he has been a long time advocate for development of a local **VETERANS COURT**.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of June 6, 2011 (Page 3 of 3)

Guest Jordan Towers added that his employer SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES already has a good working relationship with the Police Department administration of a 'VETERANS 'POD' at the City Jail in San Bruno. He reported that this program has potential for becoming the 'base clientele' for eventual development of a City of San Francisco Veterans Court.

C. HOMELESS Veterans.

Comm. Gibbs reported that the next Bay Area Veterans 'Stand-down' (a bi-annual event to provide direct services to Homeless Veterans), is now scheduled for AUGUST, of 2012. President Wong asked that Comm. Gibbs plan to provide the Commission with a monthly update on his meetings with SFPD and developments involving homeless veterans and the 'Veterans Pod' in the San Bruno jail, as part of a continuing AGENDA item for all future VAC meetings. Comm. Gibbs agreed to do so.

D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

President WONG made reference to an email he had earlier sent to Commissioners, which covered five specific items of recent development in this area. He began by announcing that POTUS Barack Obama recently awarded the extremely rare Medal of Honor to Army Sgt. LEROY PETRY for his bravery and heroism in action in the Afghanistan conflict. His LEGISLATIVE REPORT also made reference to topics including a House of Representatives Committee Hearing on VA Practices.

E. National Veterans Groups.

Comm. Levin reported that 'models' of the THREE 'finalist' designs for a future Courtyard Veterans MEMORIAL are now on view in the lobby of the War Memorial Veterans building. The Memorial Commission is seeking input and comments on the designs to help shape their final choice. Comm. Levin and guest Roger Dong urged all meeting attendees to support this important project to the utmost; including personal donations, if possible. They point out that the development of this project is an indicator of veterans' commitment to future utilization of the War Memorial Veterans Building as a primary center for the needs and interest of the veteran community of the city. Comm. Levin pointed out that plans for the 'division of space' in the building (after the 2-year retrofit shut-down) are now in heavy negotiation between the War Memorial Commission (as advocates for Veterans use of building space), and the Board of Trust and their advocacy for expanded use of building space by the Arts Community.

F. Veterans Projects.

Sec'y Noetzel reported that he received a CAL-VET document from Comm. Ramirez, which outlines the State of California Hiring Policies on 'Preference Points' for State employment with respect to Veterans. The document delineates several job categories, and what the specific Veterans Advantage is for each. The document is available to the public, and should be widely distributed among job-seeking veterans.

G. War Memorial Veterans Building. (Largely covered in Paragraph E, Agenda item 9, above) Comm. Levin recounted an extensive list of Veterans Building related meetings and events during the next two weeks.

Agenda Item 10 - Old Business

Comm. Caldera asked if the Secretary could provide new VAC Business cards, both for new Commissioners, and for all Commissioners who needed them. Sec'y Noetzel agreed to do so and asked Commissioners who needed cards to provide specific information for the order, immediately after adjournment. Comm. Caldera also mentioned the Commission WEBSITE PAGES, and specifically mentioned that the page indicating a list of VETERANS RELATED SERVICES/CONTACTS is outdated, with many obsolete links indicated. Sec'y Noetzel indicated that he is continuing to update our Website Pages and that he would address this issue in the near future. Comm. Gibbs offered to help with development of an updated list of Veterans Services Links.

Comm. Baldonado again thanked the Commission for its support of the proposed Federal Legislation in support of the Fairness to Filipino Veterans Act as introduced by Rep. Spier. He asked that we continue to support this legislation in every possible way.

Chair's Call for ANNOUNCEMENTS

- President Wong announced that the Oakland A's have scheduled a Tribute to US Veterans and Armed Forces personnel, as part of their 4th of July game festivities. He announced that Reduce Rate tickets are available to all veterans if they mention the PASSWORD when ordering tickets (The password: 'SALUTE').

Agenda Items 11/12 - Honors Report, Moment of Silence, Adjournment

In memory of American Armed Services members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed service community.

After Moment of Silence observance, the meeting was AJORNED at 7:40pm

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, August 1, 2011

MEETING AGENDA

President Raymond Wong, Presiding

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
 - a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 6 June, 2011
5. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

6. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report.
- B. Vice President's Report; VP R. Wong to report.
- C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel will report on:
 - > Attendance notice from Mayor's office.
 - > Status of Board of Supervisors appointments to the VAC
 - > Distribution of new Business Cards
 - > Review of VAC Website Pages and issues.

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7. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

- A. Veterans Employment. Comm. THOMPSON (Lead, to report on 5/11/11 JOB FAIR, and other).
- B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
- C. HOMELESS Veterans.
- D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Pres. R. WONG will lead discussion to consider VAC support for CA Assembly Bill 199 introduced by Fiona Ma. Thrust of the bill is to encourage Social Science instruction on Public Schools (Grades 7-12) to include history of the significant role played by our Filipino allies in World War 2.
- E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS.
- F. VETERANS PROJECTS. Comm. NOETZEL, (Lead), to report on development progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
- G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Update on current status of negotiations with Board of Trust with respect to apportionment of building space for VETERAN related use.

8. NEW Business:

- A. Pres. Wong to lead discussion on Proposed Commission Rules for written communication, to include:
 - > Commissioners to have OPTION to be copied on all Commission Correspondence
 - > Commission Communications go out under President and VP.
 - > Request of the City Attorneys office, Clerk of the Board and Mayors Office be approved by Commission President.
 - > Appointments as liaisons with veterans service organizations and other veterans support agencies and organizations to be made by the Commission President.

9. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

10. OLD BUSINESS

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

12. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at:

Stephen Noetzel, Secretary, at email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the FIRST Monday of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 104 of the War Memorial Veterans Building, at 401 Van Ness Avenue (across from City Hall).

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Aug. 1, 2011

Agenda item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by VAC President Ray Wong at 6:05pm. The meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance, led by the President.

Agenda item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Gibbs, Gruwell, Noetzel, Ramirez, Rose, Thompson, Wilkerson, D. Wong & R. Wong. (13)

Absent: Commissioner(s): Comm. J. Guglielmoni, (medical issues), Comm. W. Levin (wife's illness).

Attending Guests: Lt. Col. (Ret.) Roger Dong, Col. (Ret.) Deborah Dacumos, Mr. Jerom Vahai.

There was no City Attorney representative present.

Agenda item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

The Meeting AGENDA was reviewed. **MOTION** to accept Agenda, as written (Comm. Wilkerson 2nd Comm.

Thompson). In Discussion, **Comm. Noetzel** requested clarification of item listed under New Business. After minor correction, meeting **AGENDA**, was **passed unanimously**.

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

The Draft Minutes of the June 6, 2011 VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) was reviewed. Comm. Caldera offered a MOTION to accept Minutes as written (2nd - Comm. Ramirez). In discussion, Comm. Rose suggested correction of a minor spelling error at item 6. Discussion ended, vote was held and the June 6, 2011 Meeting Minutes, (as amended) passed unanimously.

Agenda item 5 - PUBLIC COMMENT

Meeting guest Col. **Deborah Dacumos (Ret.)** was introduced by Comm. Noetzel. Col. **Dacumos** described her background, saying that she recently retired after a **30+ year-long career in the US Army**, where she first served as a nurse, and continued thereafter in hospital and Medical Services supervision. Her foreign service tours included tours Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan. She also served at the Palo Alto Medical Facility. **Deborah is a resident of San Francisco** and is considering making application to serve on the VAC.

Commissioner Roger Dong, President of the SF War Memorial Building Commission (WMC) provided an update on 'startup' progress of the new Veterans Resource Center (in Room 205). He stated that new computers were recently installed (by young vets from the Bay Area Alliance of Student Veterans). He announced that the target date for opening of the VRC is within 2 weeks.

Meeting guest **Mr. Jerom Vahai** introduced himself, and spoke of his work as a volunteer 'facilitator' to contact **private corporations** – especially those who may have **"Green Jobs"** available (i.e. jobs involved with preservation of the environment). His initiative in this area is gaining traction and he has been invited to the **White House** to describe his work.

Agenda item 6 - Officers Reports

A - Presidents Report. President Raymond Wong reported that he and Comm. Dara Wong recently attended (and helped serve food) at a Picnic Cook-out for residents of the Community Living Center @ Ft. Miley; including past VAC Commissioner Ralph Gibson who now resides there. Comm. Gibson sends greetings to the current Commission. They also attended the 4th of July Oakland A's game, where veterans and military service members were honored, and they volunteered at another fund-raising event sponsored by the S.F. Giants, to benefit the Northern Cal Internal Research Enterprise (NCIRE – an ongoing cancer research program at the S.F. VA Medical facility).

B – Secretary's Report.

Sec'y. Noetzel began with the **Mayor's Survey on Commission Attendance**. He reported that Secretaries of the 97 City Commissions, Boards and Councils had recently received **new Reporting Requirements for Meeting Attendance and Tardiness** for Mayoral appointees. There are separate, but similar requirements for BOS Appointees. He emphasized the **importance of each Commissioner attending the full meeting each month**, unless a valid excuse is submitted; prior to the meeting if at all possible.

Sec'y. Noetzel also reported on his recent email exchange with City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass. Sec'y Noetzel requested a **Legal Opinion on the Gender Requirement for the two currently opened (BOS Appointed) seats on the Commission**, as there seems to be some question if BOTH vacancies must be filled by female veterans. Sec'y Noetzel reported that Mr. Snodgrass recently send him a **Legal Opinion that clarifies the matter**. In short, **BOTH current Commission vacancies, must be filled by Board Appointed female veterans.**

Sec'y. Noetzel also reported the status of the VAC Website pages. Updating files with links to numerous agencies that service the needs of vets is a difficult. Up to 30% of links shown are no longer valid. The problem is that 'dead links' cannot be individually deleted from the list. Comm. Alfidi stated that the '311' Portal' on the City website might be a useful alternative, and perhaps we could wrap the Veterans Service portion of that system into the VAC Website pages. Sec'y Noetzel agreed to look into the prospect of doing so.

[illegible]

Agenda Item 7 – REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

- A. Veterans Employment: Comm. THOMPSON (Lead) reports that statistics for Number of Veterans HIRED, as a result of the 5/11/11 JOB FAIR, will be announced at a EDD Leadership meeting on 15 August. He also reported on the difficulties of finding employment for veterans with criminal records.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE. Comm. Ramirez announced that in his role as Minority Veterans Program Coordinator (for the S.F. VA Medical Center), he will be continuing to present his **Veterans TOWN HALL MEETINGS in Room 207 of the Veterans building.** The next Town Hall sessions will be on **Wed, the 24th of August** (9-11am and 5-7pm); and every **4th Wednesday of the month thereafter.** He distributed FLYERS for the ongoing meetings and urged all Commissioners to attend when possible, and to spread the word to add additional agencies to make presentations.

- C. HOMELESS Veterans. Comm. Gibbs (lead) reports that the next "Stand-down" to provide on-site services for needy vets is **planned for September of 2012**, and will focus on services for 'Post 911' era vets. The bi-annual event is in the planning stages. **Donations and volunteers are needed.** (See also, item 'E', below).

- D. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Pres. R. WONG reminded the Commission that he had recently sent out an Email that provided a full review of current State and Federal legislation involving veteran's issues. There was considerable discussion on a late development involving House Resolution 2055. By his introduction of 'Amendment #564' Senator COBURN seeks to institute stringent new requirements to the current 'Presumptive Causes' for 'Agent Orange' related disabilities and illness. Sec'y Noetzel proposed to DRAFT a new VAC RESOLUTION on this issue, to OPOSE the restrictive COBURN Amendment, for presentation to the Commission as an AGENDA item for the next meeting. Pres. Wong agreed to this plan and stated that the Sept. meeting AGENDA will include consideration and potential ACTION on this important matter.

Comm. Baldonado then opened discussion on the **Agenda Item** regarding **CA Assembly Bill 199** introduced by **Fiona Ma**. Thrust of the bill is to **encourage Social Science instruction on Public Schools (Grades 7-12)** to include **history** of the significant role played by **our Filipino allies in World War 2**. Pres. Wong stated that the Bill has been introduced, but there is no legislative action on it yet.

Comm. Baldonado also reported that he was recently in Washington DC where Rep. Jackie Speier and Rep. Rep. Colleen Hanabusa (from Hawaii) lobbied for support for HR210, the Filipino Veterans Fairness Act. He reported that Congresswoman Speier thanked the VAC for its role in initiating a strong Resolution in Support, passed by the S.F. Board of Supervisors and endorsed by Mayor Lee. Hopefully such Resolutions in Support will aid eventual passage of this important legislation.

Comm. Caldera opened discussion on CA Assembly Bill 201 regarding establishment of additional VETERAN'S COURTS in CA. He requested that VAC support for this legislation ALSO be added to the September VAC meeting Agenda. After further discussion, Comm. Caldera agreed to write a DRAFT LETTER in support of establishment of a San Francisco Veteran's Court (regardless of who funds it and regardless of whose jurisdiction it operates under). Pres. Wong agreed to place it on the Sept. meeting Agenda for full discussion and potential ACTION.

E. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS

Comm. Critchlow reported that under jurisdiction of the AMVETS (a National Veteran's Advocacy Organization), a program to provide meals for San Francisco Homeless Veterans has been established. At present the program is operative every other SUNDAY, in Room 202 of the War Memorial Veteran's Building! She also reported that Safeway Stores has made an ongoing commitment to provide generous food donations for the program. Comm. Critchlow also reported that she will be a delegate at the upcoming National AMVETS Convention, in Washington D.C.

- F. VETERANS PROJECTS** Sec'y Noetzel (lead) reported on development progress on project to determine VETERANS HIRING POLICIES within the Major S.F. Corporations. He has been in communication with executives of J.P.Morgan/CHASE BANK regarding their development of a 'Consortium' of TEN major US Corporations, in a joint- commitment to hire 100,000 veterans by the year 2020! Program Director Susan White reports that CHASE is still finalizing agreements with Consortium members and will announce names of Corporations involved by next month. Also "several hundred" veterans have already been hired under the program. Full statistics also next month. Ms. White says that TYPES of jobs offered to vets vary from manual labor to technical and office skills, to entry level management positions. She said that within CHASE, they have found that one of the best 'fits' for younger veterans is the position of Personal Banker, at Chase branches across the nation. She said that veterans do very well in this important Local Community Relations position, and at the same time it is an excellent career-path position for them. She also suggested that we direct veterans to their WEBSITE that is specifically designed to explain the Help to Veterans programs at Chase, including a direct link to Career Opportunities at Chase. The website address: www.chasemilitary.com

G. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. Comm. Caldera provided information on a new POLICY in force with respect to reserving space for events within the building. He reported that 'Building Management' has instituted new requirements for insurance, and a CONTRACT before space can be reserved for use by veterans and associated groups. Comm. Caldera requested that this issue be included on the AGENDA for the Sept. VAC meeting, for a full discussion and potential ACTION by the Commission. Pres. Wong agreed to add the issue as a September Agenda item.

Pres. Wong then asked visiting War Memorial Building Commissioner **Roger Dong** to report on the **current status** of negotiations with **Board of Trust** with respect to **apportionment of building space for VETERAN** related use. Comm. Dong reported that the **key to retention of Building Space** for Veterans is our **collective ability to develop programs, tenants**, (like the new Veterans Resource Center), to produce a **Building Usage Volume** that clearly demonstrates an **ongoing need** for retention of a significant percentage of Building space. He closed in the hope that the **VAC will continue to develop programs** (like **Town Hall Meetings and Direct Services Programs to Student veterans and Homeless Veterans**, that result in a permanent and significant increase in Building usage. Comm. Caldera then commented that **current Board of Trust plans include a Building Space Allotment Plan that limits total space for Veterans activities to a mere 17% of available square footage**, after the scheduled retrofit.

Agenda Item 8 – NEW BUSINESS

Pres. Wong opened discussion on Proposed Commission Rules for written communication, to include:

- Commissioners to have OPTION to be copied on all Commission Correspondence
- Commission Communications go out under President and VP.
- Requests to the City Attorneys office, Clerk of the Board and Mayors Office shall be approved by Commission President.
- Appointments as liaisons with veterans service organizations and other veterans support agencies and organizations to be made by the Commission President.

After Pres. Wong opened discussion on the initial item, Sec'y Noetzel displayed a print-out of his 10-page record of J. JULY Email correspondence with the Office of the Mayor. He explained that it is the practice of the Mayor's Office, as well as the Clerk of the BOS, to communicate with the SECRETARY of each Commission, as the PRIMARY COMMUNICATION CONTACT. He further explained that most of the Email volume involved mundane administrative subjects. Sec'y Noetzel further stated that if members of the Commission preferred to be "copied in" on the dozens of Email messages exchanged each month, he will be happy to add such Commissioners to the 'Copy to' box of each such Email. In addition, Sec'y Noetzel insisted that he does indeed 'copy in' the Commission President, on ALL Email that is of a substantive, or Policy nature. Comm. Gruwell then made a distinction between 'Paid Secretaries' (on the 'A-List' Commissions) and the Volunteer Secretaries (on Commissions such as the VAC). Sec'y Noetzel replied that he sees no such distinction in the pattern of Communication from City Officials. Comm. Gruwell stated that all appearance of inappropriate communication (between Secretary and City Officials) could be precluded if individual Commissioners could 'Opt-in' to be 'copied' on all communication. Sec'y Noetzel replied again, that he would be happy to comply.

At this point in the discussion, **Comm. Caldera** pointed out that **neither the author of the (above) Agenda items (Comm. W. Levin), nor the City Attorney (Mr. Snodgrass)** was present. **Comm. Caldera** then offered a **Motion to Table the FIRST TREE items**, on this account. The Motion was **seconded by Comm. Gruwell**. The **VOTE TO TABLE** was unanimous. **Pres. Wong** assured the Commission that **these (three) items would also be added to the Sept. VAC meeting AGENDA**.

Pres. Wong then opened discussion on the Appointment of individual Commissioners to serve as LEAD or LIAISON Commissioners for a variety of ongoing issues and projects that represent the recurring items on monthly VAC Meeting Agendas. Comm. Caldera offered a Motion to Authorize the Commission President to make such Liaison Appointments. Sec'y Noetzel seconded and the vote was unanimous. President Wong is authorized to make Liaison Appointments, at will. A list of issues/projects, and Liaison Commissioners then appointed by Pres. Wong follows:

- **Comm. Eddie Ramirez** accepted appointment as **Liaison Commissioner** for the **VA Medical Facility** at **Ft. Miley**.
- **Comm. Alex Crichlow** accepted appointment as **Liaison Commissioner** to **AMVETS**, and to the **Order of Elks**, and to **Families of Veterans** and **Service members**.
- **Comm. Amber Rose** accepted appointment as **Liaison Commissioner** to **ALL "Post 9/11" Veterans Groups/Associations**. (i.e. **Campus & other**).
- **Comm. Gibbs** accepted appointment as **Liaison Commissioner** for **Incarcerated Veterans**, and for **Homeless Veterans Issues**, and for the **East Bay Stand-Down**.
- **Comm. Baldonado** accepted appointment as **Liaison Commissioner** to the **Filipino Veterans Community**.

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- Comm. Caldera accepted appointment as Liaison Commissioner to the American Legion.
- Comm. Edwin Wilkerson, and Comm. Michael Thompson accepted dual Appointment as Liaison Commissioners on Veterans Employment Issues and for Liaison with Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and the Order of the Purple Heart.
- Comm. Noetzel accepted appointment as Liaison Commissioner to Veterans for Peace, and as Liaison for the Corporate Veteran Hiring program.
- Comm. Alfidi accepted appointment as Liaison for Active Duty Military Services.
- Comm. Dara Wong was appointed as Liaison to District 14, Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).
- Comm. Levin was appointed (in absentia) as Liaison to American Legion Post 244.

Agenda Item 9 – Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera opened a discussion on a new Commission initiative around the upcoming FLEET WEEK In San Francisco. He suggested that Commissioners solicit vendors and businesses that they normally deal with 'on a day-to-day' basis, for the potential of offering FLEET WEEK DISCOUNTS. As an example, he reports that the Gym he uses (24-Hour Fitness) has offered FREE use of Gym Facilities and Equipment, to all visiting members of the Armed Forces, and to Veterans during Fleet Week. Comm. Caldera suggested that in the coming weeks, Commissioners solicit local businesses for similar Fleet Week Discounts, and further suggested that the **Agenda for the September Meeting** include a 'follow-up' item (under Goals/Plans) to review and publicize all such vendor donations.

Comm. Caldera then opened a discussion on Veterans Day, and the traditional VETERANS DAY PARADE, in San Francisco. He pointed out that since the demise of Comm. Champaign (who organized the Parade for the past several decades), no one has 'stepped up' to take a leadership role to plan and organize this event. In short, if no one on this Commission steps-up to lead this event, there will likely be no Veterans Day Parade in San Francisco, for the first time in over 50-years. Comm. Ramirez suggested establishment of a 'Continuity Book' to insure that major traditions can be more easily preserved.

Agenda Item 10 – OLD BUSINESS None for this meeting; or covered elsewhere.

Agenda Item 11 – Announcements

Comm. Critchlow introduced a "Signing of the Covenant" program, whereby Agency's, Organizations and Individuals commit to furthering the interests of Veterans of Service to America. The program is just in its inception, and a **Development Meeting** is set for 18 Aug. She will have a further report on the program in September.

Comm. Caldera offered 3 announcements, specifically:

1. On Sunday the 14th of August, a 'Celebration of Life' event to commemorate recent passing of ARCH WILSON who recently passed. Mr. Wilson was a champion for veterans issues and a Founding member of American Legion Alexander Hamilton Post 448. The Event is set for start at 1:00pm, in room 207 of the War Memorial Veteran's Building.

2. In commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the tragic events of 9/11/01, a number of patriotic organizations are planning Memorial events. Among these, the Mayor's Office (working with 'Hands Across America') will be making announcement of related events and activities. Commissioners are encouraged to participate as appropriate.

3. On Sunday the 18th of September, American Legion Post 315 will host its 2nd Annual Luau in the Veteran's Building. The 'Welcome Event' is opened to all area veterans and their families.

Comm. Rose announced that on Friday, the 26th of August, the group 'VETS STRONG' will host a Young Vets Service Expo, from 4-7pm at City College.

Guest Roger Dong announced that FREE TICKETS for the September 7th Full Dress Rehearsal of the World Première Opera HEART OF A SOLDIER, are available to Veterans and their guests via an ORDER FORM on the MARINES MEMORIAL WEBSITE.

Pres. Wong announced that he will be out of town for the September VAC meeting (scheduled for the SECOND Monday In September, i.e. September 12, 2011), and that he has appointed Past President Wally Levin to Chair that meeting. All additional requests for Agenda Items for the September VAC meeting, should be forwarded directly to Commissioner Levin.

Agenda Item 12 – Honors Report, Moment of Silence, Adjournment

In memory of American Armed Services members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed service community, and for this particular meeting, in memory of our comrade, ARCHIBALD WILSON. After Moment of Silence observance, the meeting was **ADJORNED** at 8:15pm

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City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, September 12, 2011
MEETING AGENDA

Acting Chair: Commissioner WALLACE LEVIN

(In the absence of Pres. Wong who is attending reunion of his ship, the USS Tower Assoc., of which he is President)

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
 a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 1 August, 2011
5. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of quests and general comments by quests).*

6. Officers REPORTS:

- A. Chairman's Report: Comm. Levin to report on:
- Veterans Day Parade, 2011....planning & volunteer opportunities
 - Endorsement for Design Selection for Veterans Memorial Project, including potential ACTION on Advisory Letter of Support to Mayor and BOS.
- B. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Noetzel will report on VAC Website Pages and issues.

7. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:

A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Dual Liaison(s), Comm. Thompson, and Comm. Wilkerson, to report on latest developments in this area, including Report on 8/15/11 Meeting to review results of the JOB FAIR in May.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

- > Liaison, **Comm. Critchlow** to report on **Veterans Health Care Exercise Program**, including potential **ACTION** on Advisory Letter of Support to Mayor and BOS.
- > Liaison **Comm. Critchlow** to report on 'Signing of the Covenant' Program and further developments after 8/18/11 meeting on the project.
- > Liaison, **Comm. Ramirez** to report on his ongoing series of TOWN HALL MEETINGS in Veterans Building, including report on meeting of 8/24/11 and plans for future meetings, including potential **ACTION** on Advisory Letter of Support to Mayor and BOS.

C. HOMELESS Veterans. (Note: Liaison Comm. Gibbs not available due to medical issues).

Comm. Critchlow to report on ongoing AMYETS program to provide meals for San Francisco Homeless Veterans every other SUNDAY, in Room 202 of the War Memorial Veteran's Building.

8. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

- A. **Chairman Levin** to report on status of **CA Assembly Bill 199**, introduced by **Fiona Ma**, which encourages Public Schools (Grades 7-12) to include Social Science instruction on the history of the significant role played by our Filipino allies in WWII. Discussions on this item may include **ACTION** to support AB-199..
- B. **Comm. Caldera** to report on **CA Assembly Bill 201** regarding establishment of **additional VETERAN'S COURTS** in California, including **Gov. Brown's recent VETO** of proposed legislation as a purported Budget Cutting Measure – **even against evidence** that establishment of such courts **REDUCE overall State expense**. Discussions on this issue may include **ACTION** on Advisory Letter in Support of establishment of additional Veterans Courts.
- C. **Sec'y Noetzel** to report on the current status of **'House Resolution 2055**, and in particular, Senator Coburn's **'Amendment #564'** which would institute **stringent new requirements** to the current **'Presumptive Causes'** for **'Agent Orange'** related disabilities and illness. Sec'y Noetzel will present his proposed **DRAFT a new VAC RESOLUTION** to **OPPOSE** the restrictive Coburn **Amendment**, which may include potential **ACTION** on this important matter.

D. Comm. Levin to report on CA Senate Bill 888, introduced by Sen. Ted Lieu of Torrance. The Bill introduces reasonable limitations on protests and demonstrations at funerals for military personnel. Discussions on this issue may include **ACTION** on Advisory Letter in Support of this legislation.

9. NATIONAL VETERANS GROUPS.

Comm. Critchlow to report on the recent **AMVETS National Convention**, to which she was a delegate.

10. VETERANS PROJECTS

Liaison Comm. **NOETZEL**, to report on progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on **VETERANS HIRING POLICIES**.

11. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

A. Comm. Caldera to report on his investigation of Restrictive New Policies with respect to **reserving space for Veterans Related and Patriotic events within the building**, including arbitrary new requirements for insurance, and a **CONTRACT** before space can be reserved. Also, **further discussions** on current status of negotiations with Board of Trustees with respect to apportionment of building space for VETERAN related use.

B. Comm. Alfidi to provide review of **World Première performances** of new Opera: **HEART OF A SOLDIER**, and related activities during recent past.

12. NEW Business:

Chairman Levin to lead discussion on Proposed Commission Rules for written communication, to include:

- i. Commissioners to have **OPTION** to be copied on all Commission Correspondence
- ii. Commission Communications go out under President and VP.
- iii. Requests of the City Attorneys office, Clerk of the Board and Mayors Office shall be approved by Commission President.

13. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera to lead discussion regarding **VAC Support for FLEET WEEK** in San Francisco (Oct. 6-11, 2011), including proposal to endorse and promote discounts by local businesses and vendors for visiting Armed Services Personnel and Veterans, including **potential ACTION** on Call for Support to Fleet Week Leadership via Mayor's office.

14. OLD BUSINESS

(Review of) 9/11 'Day of Remembrance' event at War Memorial Veterans Building and 'Hands On Bay Area' volunteer activities.

15. **Honors Report and Moment of Silence:** In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

16. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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Agenda item 7 – REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

A - Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Dual Liaison Commissioners (**Thompson & Wilkerson**) deferred to report by **Comm. Ramirez** who reported on his recent (Town Hall) seminar: "**How to Get Federal Government Job**". His presentation on this topic was also given the several Bay Area EDD offices. He also reported that the VA Med Center in San Francisco recently hired several veterans.

B - Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

> Liaison. Comm. Critchlow reported on the **WHOLE VETS** program that she has been working on with AMVETS for some time now. The program involves a complete **Veterans Health Care Program**, including tangible help in areas of nutrition, and healing support for mind, body and spirit. After her presentation **Comm. Noetzel** made motion (2nd, **Comm. Rose**) that the **VAC** enthusiastically **ENDORSES** the **Whole Vets Program**, and lends all available support for its development as a community service to veterans. With minimal added discussion a **VOTE** was held, and the **ENDORSEMENT MOTION** passed unanimously. From this point **Comm. Critchlow** will work on development of a Letter to the Mayor, advising support for this valuable program from the City of San Francisco. **Possible action on same at the next VAC meeting.**

> **Comm. Critchlow** also reported on the **'Signing of the Covenant' Program**, another new initiative currently targeting government and corporate leaders to participate in a **'Signed Covenant'** to dedicate their work to the highest ideals of Service to the Community. She and others are working to develop a **major Signing of the Covenant EVENT** at the vets building some time in the next few months. **Further reports at next VAC meeting.**

> Comm. Ramirez reported on his monthly series of **TOWN HALL MEETINGS** in the Veterans Building. He reports that after 3 months, interest and participation in the **Town Hall Meeting** concept is **growing**. On the Service Provider side he has hosted **presentations** by **State and Federal Government agencies, and Service Providers** like **Swords to Plowshares**. He reports that with publicity from AMVETS and leadership of the new Veterans Resource Center, he's now seeing **15-30 Veterans in attendance**, a significant increase over 6-8 vets at the initial meetings. Comm. Alfidi offered advice that additional publicity and a **marketing program** was needed to spread the word on the Town Hall concept to the vets community. A motion was made by Comm. Caldera (2nd by Comm. Gruwell) that the VAC enthusiastically **ENDORSES the Town Hall Meeting Program**, and lends all available support for its development as a community service to veterans. With minimal added discussion a **VOTE** was held, and the **ENDORSEMENT MOTION** passed **unanimously**.

C - HOMELESS Veterans. (Note: Liaison Comm. Gibbs not available due to medical issues).

Comm. Critchlow reported on the ongoing **AMVETS** program which currently provides meals for **San Francisco Homeless Veterans** every other **SUNDAY**, in Room 202 of the War Memorial Veteran's Building. She reported that approx. 30 homeless vets were provided with meals during the last Meals for Vets event on 9/11/11. Food is provided via donations from **SAFEWAY**, and from **AMVETS**.

Agenda item 8 – Veterans Related LEGISLATION

A. Chairman Levin reported the status of CA Assembly Bill 199, introduced by Fiona Ma, which encourages Public Schools (Grades 7-12) to include Social Science Instruction on the history of the significant role played by our Filipino allies in WWII. A motion was made by Comm. Baldonado (2nd by Comm. Wilkerson) that the VAC enthusiastically ENDORSE the passage of AB199, including a LETTER (to Mayor and BOS, w/ copy to Fiona Ma), urging City Government SUPPORT for this worthy legislation. With minimal added discussion a VOTE was held, and the ENDORSEMENT MOTION passed unanimously. Secretary to follow up with production of said letter.

B. Comm. Caldera reported to CA Assembly Bill 201 regarding establishment of additional VETERAN'S COURTS in California, including Gov. Brown's recent VETO of proposed legislation as a purported Budget Cutting Measure. Comm. Caldera submitted for consideration a **DRAFT RESOLUTION** on the matter. The **10-point Resolution** covers the history, need and advantages of the Veterans Court program and urges the City Government of San Francisco to "utilize all possible influence" to support passage of this legislation. A motion was made by Comm. Noetzel (2nd by Comm. Baldonado) that the VAC enthusiastically **PASS** this **RESOLUTION**, and attach it with LETTER (to Mayor and BOS) With minimal added discussion a **VOTE** was held, and the **MOTION passed unanimously**. The Secretary was instructed to produce a **Cover Letter** to transmit the Resolution to the Mayor and BOS with copies to legislation author (CA District 53 Assembly member Betsy Butler), and copies to Presiding Judge Feinstein, as well as to Swords to Plowshares as they have also been supportive of this legislation.

C. Sec'y Noetzel reported on the current status of **House Resolution 2055**, and in particular, Senator Coburn's highly objectionable **'Amendment #564'** which would institute **stringent new requirements** to the current **'Presumptive Causes'** for **'Agent Orange'** related disabilities and illness. Sec'y Noetzel reported on his extensive research on the status of Amendment 564 and **recommends that the Commission DOES NOT**, at this time, **take action on this matter** since:

1. In a recent Senate vote, the **amendment was soundly defeated** by members of both parties (69-30), and
2. The overall Appropriation bill (**HR2055**) **is now in Committee**, to negotiate expenditure elements, including VA, and
3. Leaders of the Joint Committee, including the author of HR2055 (Rep. John Culberson, R. TX) **have no intention of including any elements of the destructive Coburn Amendment into the final Bill.**

In summation, Sec'y Noetzel reports that *the current "Presumptive Causes" status of Agent Orange Medical & Disability Benefits are no longer in danger of reduction, for budget cutting, or any other reason.*

[illegible]

reported that he sent 2 Emails to **Fleet Week Chairman Gen. Mike Myatt**, regarding promotion of an offer by "24-Hour Fitness Center(s)" to provide **free use of their facilities to Military Personnel during Fleet Week**. He reported that he was **disappointed that he had received no response with respect to this offer**. **Comm. Levin** explained that **Gen. Myatt** has Command and Control of all Fleet week arrangements, and could only suggest that **Comm. Caldera** continue to attempt contact w/ the office of **Gen. Myatt**, via **phone calls and follow-up email**. **Comm. Caldera** said he will continue follow-up, and requested that the item again be placed on the **October 3 Meeting Agenda** for a status review.

Agenda item14 - OLD BUSINESS

The specific Agenda item was a Review of the **9/11 'Day of Remembrance'** events at War Memorial Veterans Building and the associated **'Hands On Bay Area'** (HOBA) volunteer activities planned. **Guest JORDAN TOWER** (of Swords to Plowshares) reported that the **'Remembrance Event'** had excellent local TV coverage, and numerous volunteers (including veterans) participated clean-up activities in the Civic Center area, and made up **Care Packages** to be distributed to local veterans in need. Much of the volunteer efforts came through the new **Veterans Resource Center** in the WM Veterans Building. **Comm. Caldera** reported that on 9/11/11 he counted over **300** such **'Care Packages'** being prepared for distribution to needy area veterans, and the **AMVETS** group was serving afternoon meals to homeless veterans in room 202 of the War Memorial Veterans Building.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaking on behalf of War Memorial Building Commissioner **Roger Dong**, **Comm. Alfid**i distributed a 4-page document that publicized the recent opening of the **VRC (Veterans Resource Center)**, in room 205.

Comm. Caldera announced that on **Sunday afternoon the 18th of September**, **American Legion Post 315** will be hosting the **2nd Annual LUAU and PIG ROAST PARTY**, in room 215 of the Veterans building. He extended a warm welcome to all Commissioners and area veterans to attend this celebration.

Agenda item15 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In specific memory of (recently passed) former **Commissioner Arch WILSON**, Former **Commissioner Renie CHAMPAIGN** and his wife **Margaret Champaign**, as well as in memory of all American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda item16 - AJORNMENT

The VAC General Meeting of 9/12/11 was **Adjourned**, by Acting Chair Commissioner **Wallace Levin**, at 8:08pm.

*Minutes of the 9/12/11 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and
APPROVED at the VAC Meeting of October 3, 2011*

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OCT 26 2011

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1:40 p.m. rest

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

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SEP 29 2011

- SAN FRANCISCO
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1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
 2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
 3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
 4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 12 September, 2011
 5. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).
 6. WELCOME to New Commissioner Col.(Ret.) Deborah Dacumos AN, PhD.
President WONG, and Sec'y Noetzel to introduce & welcome our newly appointed Commissioner.
 7. NEW Business – President to recommend EXECUTIVE SESSION.....
as Commission Member wishes to address the Commission on a highly confidential personal matter.
Procedures for Executive Session will be announced by Sec'y Noetzel.
 8. Officers' REPORTS:
 - A. President's Report; President Ray Wong to report on:
Conventions/conferences attended, and more.
 - B. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on:
VAC Website - CHANGES and issues
VAC Correspondence since last meeting
 9. Current VETERANS PROJECTS
 - > Liaison and Event Organizer Comm. W. Levin to report on **VETERANS DAY PARADE** (Scheduled for 11/11/11).
 - > Liaison Comm. NOETZEL, to report on progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on **VETERANS HIRING POLICIES**.
 10. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:
 - A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.
Dual Liaison(s), Comm. Thompson, and Comm. Wilkerson, to report on latest developments in this area, including Report on 8/15/11 Meeting to review results of the JOB FAIR in May.
 - B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
 - > Liaison, Comm. Critchlow to report on Veterans Health Care Exercise Program, including potential ACTION on Advisory Letter of Support to Mayor and BOS.
 - > Liaison Comm. Critchlow to report on 'Signing of the Covenant' Program and plans for organizing a major Program Kick-off and Covenant Signing EVENT, at Veterans Building.
 - > Liaison, Comm. Ramirez to report on his ongoing series of TOWN HALL MEETINGS in Veterans Building, including report the September meetings (AM and PB sessions of meetings on 9/28/11).
 - C. HOMELESS Veterans. (Note: Liaison Comm. Gibbs not available due to medical issues).
Comm. Critchlow to report on ongoing AMVETS program to provide meals for San Francisco Homeless Veterans every other SUNDAY, in Room 202 of the War Memorial Veteran's Building.
 11. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.
 - A. Status Report on Issues that were subject of VAC letters to City Government of San Francisco on several Legislative issues (as defined by Sec'y Noetzel in his Report on VAC Correspondence).
 - B. Open Forum on new or Legislation of interest to Veterans, including potential impact of recent repeal of DADT. Discussion on media fabrication of the term "The San Francisco Military", with possible vote on ACTION to advise City of S.F. Government on this divisive term of derision.

12. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

- > Comm. Caldera to report on further developments in his investigation of Restrictive New Policies with respect to reserving space for Veterans Related and Patriotic events within the building, including presentation of a DRAFT of a proposed letter to address the new requirements for insurance, and a CONTRACT before space can be reserved. Item includes potential ACTION to include approval for forwarding of subject LETTER.
- > Discussion on efforts to promote IAVA "Smart Job Fair" in Green Room of War Memorial Veterans Building on Thursday, 6 October 2011

13. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera to lead continuing discussion regarding VAC Support for FLEET WEEK in San Francisco (Oct. 6-11, 2011), including results of the Commissioners further attempts to contact Fleet Week Events Director Gen. Mike Myatt regarding promotion of discounts by local businesses and vendors for visiting Armed Services Personnel and Veterans. Item includes potential ACTION including Letter of Inquiry to Gen. Myatt.

14. OLD BUSINESS. No items listed at publication of Agenda.

15. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities in near future.

16. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

17. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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(Continued from previous page) Agenda item 11 – Veterans Related LEGISLATION

B. An Open Forum on the impact of the recent repeal of 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' (DADT) rules opened with discussion on the recent media fabrication of the term "The San Francisco Military". **Comm. Caldera** stated that he for one, was highly offended by the recent media inference that the military is becoming a 'Gay Army' under the ridiculous conclusion that the City of San Francisco is representative as a 'model for a new (gay) military. He suggested that a letter be written to **Elaine Donnelly of the Center for Military Readiness** who recently made the offensive remarks for media publication. **President Wong** offered advice that it might be inappropriate for the Commission to take direct action in this case as that would be outside our role as Advisors to the City. **Comm. Alfidi** suggested that a more effective protest might for Commanders of American Legion Posts that find the term offensive, to write to Ms. Donnelly. The discussion ended with **Comm. Caldera** agreeing to pursue the matter via correspondence form him as Commander of an American Legion Post.

President Wong then informed Commissioners that just prior to the meeting, he sent Commissioners an **Email Summary of pending Legislation of Interest to Veterans** and asked them to review it for potential future consideration. He also announced that **Ca. Gov. BROWN** has recently signed **Executive Order B-9-11** which creates the **CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON VETERANS**, in a broad effort to bring together a variety of City, County, State, and Federal agencies who work in a variety of ways to be of assistance to the 30,000 veterans returning to California residence each year.

Agenda item 12 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

President Wong began with a short review of the issue, then (guest) Mr. Nelson LUM, newly elected President of the American Legion War Memorial Commission (ALWMC). President Lum began with a review of the role of the *ALWMC as the sole beneficiary and arbitrator* between the Arts Buildings Board of Trust (BoT), and use of the War Memorial Veterans Building by Veterans and/or Patriotic groups. He then reviewed the current status Space Planning with regard to space allocated for Veterans use as part of the *Post Retrofit Building Remodel Plan*, indicating that while much of the Space Plan is in virtual agreement, *there are still areas (particularly with respect to the 3rd floor) that are still in contention*. President Lum then addressed the issue of the *new Building Space Use form*. He stated that we have been fortunate that no major liability claims have been filed, but that future use of the building, by all users (new/old) will require adequate liability insurance. He stated that AL District 8 (i.e. California) is now researching purchase of *Umbrella Liability Insurance* coverage that would protect ALL American Legion Sponsored building activity; however that still leaves a liability responsibility for other Patriotic Groups, that make application for building use. He stated that *such groups might be able to purchase low-cost 'Riders' to add their building use to the Central Liability Insurance Policy*. President Wong brought up the possibility of use of a *Hold Harmless document* in lieu of insurance policy. Mr. Lum answered that BOTH are required. *Comm. Noetzel* then brought up the *new 3-page form* and indicated that one difficulty is the (Page 2) '*Hold Harmless*' agreement. He said it was written in difficult 'legalese' and that a potential Building User would have to hire a lawyer just to know what they were signing. He asked if it could be re-written in plain English. Mr. Lum agreed that this request could be taken under consideration.

Comm. **Caldera** then asked **ALMMC President Lum** if there were any plans being made for a new 'home' for the VAC (and other groups now regularly using the building) when the Veterans Building closes down for its Retrofit Project. **Mr. Lum** answered that they were just now starting to look into the question, and hoped to have further information soon.

ALWMC Comm. Roger Dong then gave a quick update on the new VRC and announced that AMVETS has committed to opening their own operation in the building, and will work closely with the VRC. Most importantly, AMVETS will donate their huge library of computer program software for use by the VRC. Finally, he announced that on Thursday, 10/6, a JOB FAIR will be hosted by the National Veterans Advocacy Group IAVA (Iraq/Afghanistan Vets of America). The full-day event will be in the Green Room, and all vets and potential employers are invited. President Wong thanked Mr. Lum and Mr. Dong for their presentation and appearance before the Commission.

Comm. Noetzel closed discussion in this area with a display of a FLYER which announces the **First Annual Fleet Week SMART JOB FAIR**, to be held in the Green Room of the War Memorial Veterans Building between noon and 5pm on **THURSDAY, the 6th of October, 2011**. The event is sponsored by the veterans advocacy group **IAVA (Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans of America)**, and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. It will include a Resume Workshop, Interview Training, and Information Tables staffed by Bay Area Corporations interested in expanding career opportunities for veterans. He urged all Commissioners to support the event, and attend, if possible.

Agenda item 13 - Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera reported that since last meeting **Fleet Week Events Director Gen. Mike Myatt** and his staff have contacted him and **Comm. Rose**, and included within the list of available services/benefits to visiting military, a **FREE workout session at the 24-hour Fitness location**. **Comm. Caldera** expressed hope that this success might trigger coordination in **future Fleet Week plans**, to expand the number of **San Francisco Businesses** who might offer a variety of **Fleet Week Discounts** to both **Active Duty military**, as well as **veterans**.

[illegible]

Agenda item 14 - OLD BUSINESS No items listed at publication of Agenda, however **Comm. Caldera** brought up the issue of the obligations for service as a Commissioner, including residence and impact of long-term absence due to medical issues. He expressed his view that in its present configuration, the Commission still has little representation for the 'Post 9/11 Era' Veteran. **Comm. Noetzel** reiterated that there are several (male) veterans of this era still waiting for an opportunity to serve on the Commission, and one Commissioner who has announced his intent to resign from the Commission due to ongoing health issues.

Agenda item 15 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Wong announced a need for volunteers to work on the **FREE BBQ for visiting military**, at Pier 30, on Columbus Day, **Oct. 10th**, when some estimated 6000 visiting military personnel are expected to show up for the free BBQ. Contact event coordinator Robert Hanson to volunteer.

Comm. Levin announced that he and Mrs. Levin will be embarking on a long-planned cruise, and therefore, with regret, he will be unable to participate in the Veterans Day Parade activities, nor will he be able to attend the November VAC meeting.

Comm. Caldera thanked those who participated in the **Post 315 Luau** event on 9/18 and pointed out that the event was the only event within the building on that date. He pointed out that **unless veterans make more frequent use of the building, we will have little ground to ask for retention of permanent space in the building**. He then went on to ask if Commissioners might be interested in continuing the tradition of a **December Holiday Party**. After some discussion, **President Wong** appointed **Commissioners Caldera, Wilkerson, and Noetzel** as an ad hoc **Social Function Committee**, for the express purpose of developing plans for a Holiday Social event for the VAC.

Comm. Thompson closed the Announcements section, taking the floor to make public announcement and apology for a long-term personal deception that he had perpetrated, and offered his immediate **Letter of Resignation**. After some discussion, Commissioners accepted his sincere apology. **Comm. Levin** then offered a motion to **recommend to Commissioner Thompson that he NOT resign from the Commission**, but rather that we accept his apology and urge him to continue to serve. **Comm. Noetzel** seconded. In discussion, **Comm. Alfidi** spoke in favor of the motion with the proviso that **Comm. Thompson** also promise never to repeat or further perpetrate the offense. When **Commissioner Thompson** agreed, a vote was taken on the **Levin** motion. The vote, by acclamation, was to forgive **Commissioner Thompson**, and to recommend that he continue his admirable service as a VAC Commissioner.

Agenda item 16 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of all American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda item 17 - ADJORNMENT

The VAC General Meeting of 10/3/11 was **Adjourned**, by President Raymond Wong, at 8:32pm.

Minutes of the 10/3/11 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and APPROVED (as amended herewith) at the VAC Meeting of November 7, 2011

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, November 7, 2011

MEETING AGENDA

President Raymond Wong, Presiding

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1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 3 October, 2011
5. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).
6. Officers REPORTS:
- A. President's Report; President Ray Wong (Parade Chairman) to report on current status of arrangements for VETERANS DAY PARADE, scheduled for Friday, 11/11/11. Guests 'Raz' Razwyck (Parade Marshal Chairman) and Javier Tenorio (Executive Chairman) will also provide Status Reports.
- B. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on:
- > VAC Website - CHANGES and issues
 - > BOS Rules Committee schedule to review Applications for new Commission appointments.
 - > Progress on follow-up with the VRC leadership on establishment of an Interactive Job Offer Database.
7. NEW Business – President to preside over Nomination and election of 4-member NOMINATING COMMITTEE for the purpose of nominating Officers for the 2012 term (as per Section 2, Article IV of VAC BYLAWS).
8. Current VETERANS PROJECTS
- > Liaison Comm. NOETZEL, to report on progress on project to contact Human Resources Directors of Major S.F. Corporations on VETERANS HIRING POLICIES.
9. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:
- A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.
Dual Liaison(s), Comm. Thompson, and Comm. Wilkerson, to report on latest developments in this area,
- B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.
- > Liaison, Comm. Crichlow to report on WholeVet Program, including potential ACTION on Advisory Letter of Support to Mayor and BOS.
 - > Liaison, Comm. Ramirez to report on his ongoing series of TOWN HALL MEETINGS in Veterans Building, including report the September meetings (AM and PB sessions of meetings on 10/26/11).
- C. HOMELESS Veterans.
Comm. Crichlow to report on ongoing AMVETS program to provide meals for San Francisco homeless Veterans every SUNDAY, in the War Memorial Veteran's Building.
10. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.
- > Comm. Noetzel to introduce a DRAFT RESOLUTION for VAC support of HR2634, a new Bill authored by CA Congressman Bob FILNER titled: Victims of Agent Orange Relief Act of 2011. NOTE: potential ACTION on Adoption of Resolution with Advisory letter to Mayor and BOS.
11. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING
- > Comm. Caldera to report on further developments in his investigation of Restrictive New Policies with respect to reserving space for Veterans Related and Patriotic events within the building, including presentation of a DRAFT of a proposed letter to address the new requirements for insurance, and a CONTRACT before space can be reserved. Item includes potential ACTION to include approval for forwarding of subject LETTER.

12. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera, Chair of Ad Hoc Social Function Committee to report on planning for a December VAC Holiday Party.

13. OLD BUSINESS. No items listed at publication of Agenda.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities in near future.

15. **Honors Report and Moment of Silence:** In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

16. **AJORNMENT**

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Nov. 7, 2011

Agenda item 1 – Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by **President Raymond Wong** at 6:02pm. The meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by **President Raymond Wong**.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Noetzel, Ramirez, Rose, Thompson, Wilkerson, D. Wong, R. Wong. (11)

Absent: Commissioner(s): **Comm. D. Dacumos** (excused, illness), **Comm. G. Gibbs** (excused, surgery), **Comm. C. Gruwell** (excused, travel), **Comm. W. Levin** (excused, travel).

Attending Guests: Roger Dong, Javler Tenorio, Glen Razwyck, DeAnne Isenberg, Sam Takeollrai, Jonathan Burns, Edward Cooke, and (new) Commissioners-elect: DOTTIE GUY, and JORDAN TOWERS. There was no City Attorney in attendance.

Agenda item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Caldera**; 2nd **Comm. Alfidi**. Without further discussion, meeting **Agenda** was passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

The Draft Minutes of the October 3, 2011 VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) were reviewed. Spelling and other minor corrections were offered by Commissioners Rose, Ramirez, Alfidi, Caldera. Comm. Caldera then offered a MOTION to accept Minutes as corrected (2nd Comm. Ramirez). In a subsequent Vote the October 3, 2011 Meeting Minutes, passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 - PUBLIC COMMENT

> Meeting guest **Edward Cooke** introduced himself as a **representative of Elks Lodge #3 here in San Francisco**. He announced that on Veterans Day (11/11/11) the **Elks Lodge (at 450 Post St.)** will welcome all Veterans & Active Duty personnel and families to their dining room for **discount buffet lunch and dinner** to extend their long tradition of honoring and supporting Veterans.

> Meeting Guest **Jonathan Burns, President of the S.F. Elks Lodge** added comments on the background of support for Veterans that the ELKS have extended to Veterans and Active Duty military & families. Several Commissioners rose to thank the Elks representatives, and **Comm. Ramirez** took the opportunity to invite them to **plan a presentation at a future TOWN HALL meeting.**

> Meeting Guest, ALWMC Comm. **Roger Dong** provided a quick update on the Veterans Resource Center (VRC). The VRC continues to grow in use with increasing numbers of new veterans stopping in every day.

Agenda Item 6 - Officers Reports

A - President's Report -

President Wong deferred his report to the Announcements section, then as per Agenda he opened discussion on the current status of planning for the 11/11/VETERANS DAY PARADE. He re-introduced Parade Executive Chairman Javier Tenorio who rose to provide an update. Javier announced that parade arrangements were in good order and there are some 44 distinct Parade Units that will be participating. He was confident that all obligations for a successful Parade had been met. With that he distributed to all Commissioners, individual Parade Honoree badges, courtesy of Comm. Levin. Parade Marshal Chairman Glen 'Raz' Raswyck added comments on logistics and thanked the SFPD for their support and participation in the event. He closed by urging all who volunteered for duty as Parade Marshal or Security Monitors, to assemble at the Wells Fargo Bank above, at the corner of Market and Montgomery, starting at 7:00am, to receive their Parade Marshal Vests and Armbands, and specific parade duties/assignment.

B – Secretary's Report.

Sec'y. Noetzel began his report with the announcement that meeting guests **JORDAN TOWERS**, and **DOTTIE GUY** had very recently been nominated (by the BOS Rules Committee) to fill the last two vacant seats on the Commission, those being Seat #10, (recently vacated by the resignation of Comm. Guglielmoni) and now to be filled by eventual appointment of **Mr. Towers**, and Seat #12, (the last of the opened VAC positions) now to be filled by eventual appointment of **Ms. Guy**. After a round of congratulatory applause, both **Mr. Towers** and **Ms. Guy** rose to provide additional background information on their recent military service as both had been deployed to the current Iraq/Afghanistan war-zone areas. They also spoke of their interest in extending their service by working to help veterans of all eras, as members of the VAC. Both nominees were warmly welcomed by the Commission.

Sec'y Noetzel then reported on the current **status of the VAC Website**, and the 'updates' & changes he **initiated in the past month**, including announcement (on our "Projects" Page) of the **AMVETS "every Sunday", FREE MEALS FOR VETERANS IN NEED program** recently endorsed by the VAC.

Sec'y Noetzel also reported on further efforts to establish a **VETERANS CAREER DATABASE (VCD)** within the Veterans Resource Center, whereby veterans job hunt and Employers Job offerings, could be matched.

[illegible]

(Continued from previous page) Agenda Item 10 – Veterans Related LEGISLATION

were familiar with its content. After a brief review, **Comm. Caldera** made a MOTION that the VAC endorses and adopts the Resolution as written, including the attached Letter of Advice to City Government. (2nd by **Comm. Thompson**). In the brief discussion that followed, **Comm. Alfidi** asked if the proposed legislation commits to funding of medical and rehabilitation efforts for Vietnamese Nationals. **Sec'y Noetzel** answered that the intent of the legislation would include eventual financial impact both here, AND in Vietnam, but that the Funding Authorization portion of the Bill is still in development. Without further discussion, **President Wong** called the Question. The subsequent vote to adopt the Resolution was unanimous. **Sec'y Noetzel** will follow through with forwarding the Resolution to the City government of S.F. via a Letter of Advice from the Commission.

Agenda Item 11 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

Comm. Caldera suggested that further discussion on matters related to the Veterans building would best be TABLED for future meetings as the impending City Election (on 11/8) will determine exactly who we will be dealing with on many of the still-urgent questions related to the building and its users. **President Wong** tabled the discussion as suggested.

Agenda Item 12 - Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Caldera reported on planning (by the ad-hoc Committee) for a VAC HOLIDAY PARTY in December. He said the consensus of the Committee was to plan for an abbreviated VAC meeting in December, (i.e. from 6pm to 7pm on 5 December) and after adjournment, gather again at the VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER (Room 210) for a HOLIDAY PARTY, for Commissioners, their families, as well as staff & friends of the VRC. He suggested that a contribution of \$10. per Commissioner would suffice to fund the party. **Comm. Noetzel** made a MOTION (2nd by **Comm. Rose**), to schedule the HOLIDAY PARTY as described, including the \$10. per Commissioner suggested Donation to buy appetizers and non-alcoholic drinks for the event. The subsequent VOTE was unanimous in support of the plan as presented, with cash Collections for same to be taken after meeting tonight.

Comm. Caldera then introduced a new subject under this Agenda topic; that being a goal to expand 'visibility' of the VAC in the community in the next year. He mentioned two examples of recent veterans related events (in the city) , with no contact or notice to the VAC. **Comm. Ramirez** added supportive comments along this line, and **Sec'y Noetzel** brought up the new Calif. Inter-Agency Council on Veterans, recently established by Gov. Brown. He suggested that the VAC should seek to have representation on this important new Statewide Council, as an AGENDA item early in the new term. **Comm. Rose** asked if there were plans, at the start of the New Year, to discuss and establish new GOALS AND PLANS for the VAC in 2012. **Sec'y Noetzel** suggested that the Agenda for the December Meeting include reserved time for each candidate for Commission President, to describe to the Commission, their vision for what they would like to see the VAC accomplish (in the 2012 term) as essentially their 'Platform' for election to President. There was a broad consensus in agreement.

Agenda Item 13 - OLD BUSINESS. No items listed at publication of Agenda.

Agenda Item 14 - ANNOUNCEMENTS.

> **President Wong** announced that Assembly Speaker Pro-tem **Fiona Ma**, is hosting a Pre-Veterans Day Recognition Reception for Veterans and Military families, on Wed. 11/9, from 3- 5pm on the 14th fl. @ 455 Golden Gate Ave.

> **President Wong** also announced on Saturday, the 3rd of December, his VFW 91st Division/Chinatown Post #4618 will host its 66th annual Christmas Celebration Dinner at the Four Seas Restaurant, in Chinatown. Tickets for the Banquet style dinner are \$30. each

> **Comm. Crichlow** asked **Mr. Jordan Tower** to represent Swords to Plowshares with an announcement about their Annual Dinner. **Mr. Tower** reminded all that the 15th Annual Swords to Plowshares Profiles of Courage dinner is this Thursday evening, at the Four Seasons Hotel, on Market St.. A show of hands indicated that at least half of those in attendance had already purchased tickets. A few tickets are still available

> **Comm. Rose** announced that on Tues. 11/14 at a BOS Committee meeting, Supervisors **Mar & Avalos** will introduce their Resolution to end the wars in Iraq/Afghanistan.

Agenda item 15 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item 16 - ADJOURNMENT

The VAC General Meeting of 11/7/11 was adjourned, by President Raymond Wong, at 8:22pm.

Minutes of the 11/7/11 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and APPROVED (as written) at the VAC Meeting of December 5, 2011 .

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, December 5, 2011

MEETING AGENDA

President Raymond Wong, Presiding

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
3. REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval
4. REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval
 - a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 7 November, 2011
5. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).
6. Officers REPORTS:
 - A. President's Report; President Ray Wong to WELCOME NEW VAC COMMISSIONERS, Dottie Guy, and Jordan Towers. Both have been guests at previous meetings, however this will be their FIRST OFFICIAL meeting as new Commissioners, and the first time our Commission is at full strength. President Wong (as Parade Chairman) will provide an After-Action Report on the VETERANS DAY PARADE, of 11/11/11.
 - B. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on VAC Website changes/updates, and on VAC Correspondence & contacts since precious meeting.
7. NEW Business - President to turn meeting over to NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR who will announce Committee Nominations for VAC Office positions for 2012. President Wong will then resume as meeting Chair to open the floor for additional nominations by Commission members, including self-nomination.
8. Current VETERANS PROJECTS

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
9. REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES:
 - Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
 - Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
 - C. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief Report from Liaison, Comm. Ramirez on his TOWN HALL MEETING of 11/30/11.
 - Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
10. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
11. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.
12. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

ACTION ITEM: Comm. Crichlow to offer Motion to request official VAC Endorsement for the planed 3/2/12 Community Covenant event: VETERAN & MILITARY RESOURCE FAIR, at War Memorial Veterans Building.
13. OLD BUSINESS. No items listed at publication of Agenda.
14. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities
15. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.
16. 7:00pm AJORNMENT to VAC HOLIDAY PARTY in Room 210

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Absent: Commissioner G. Gibbs (excused, surgery).

Agenda item 3 – Approval of AGENDA

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

The Draft Minutes of the November 7, 2011 VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) were reviewed. Comm. Ramirez offered a MOTION to accept Minutes as written. (2nd- Comm. Caldera). In a subsequent Vote the Motion to accept November 7, 2011 Meeting Minutes, as written, passed unanimously.

> Meeting guest, **ALWMC Commissioner Paul Cox** introduced himself and congratulated the Commission on attaining full strength with the addition of its newly appointed Commissioners, **J. Towers** and **D. Guy**. **Mr. Cox** also reported on the War Memorial Complex **Board of Trust** with respect to **relocation arrangements** for occupants of the War Memorial Veterans Building. He stated that, at present, **MOST of the organizations** with permanent office space within the building **will not receive relocation support or funding as matters now stand**.

> Meeting guest, **Matthew Martenyi** introduced himself and his work as the **Director of the WholeVet Program**. He thanked the Commission for its earlier endorsement of the program.

> Meeting Guest **ALWMC Commissioner Roger Dong** spoke briefly about a potential new funding source for the activities of the Veterans Resource Center. He suggested that an official **Letter of Advice to the Mayor (from the VAC)** might be helpful in acquisition of such funding. **President Wong** suggested that the **Advice Letter** could be added to the **Agenda for the January meeting**. **Sec'y Noetzel** volunteered to work with **Mr. Dong** in drafting the **Advice Letter** for consideration at the **January meeting** as an **ACTION ITEM**.

A. President's Report: President Ray Wong officially welcomed NEW VAC COMMISSIONERS, Dottie Guy, and Jordan Towers. Both have been guests at previous meetings, however this is their **FIRST OFFICIAL** meeting as new Commissioners, (after Ratification of their appointments by the full BOS on 11/15/11). AND, the first time our Commission has reached its full 17-member strength!

President Wong (as Parade Chairman) began his After-Action Report on the **VETERANS DAY PARADE**, of 11/11/11, by deferring to Comm. Wallace Levin as Parade Coordinator. Comm. Levin thanked all who participated in parade planning, management and participation in his absence, and announced that he is still gathering files and documents from both Parade Executive Chairman Javier Tenorio, and Parade Marshal Chairman Glen Rzapwyk. He requested that a full Report on the Parade be tabled to the January VAC meeting, when he will have had time to prepare a full Parade After-Action Report, including turn-over of all 2011 Parade files and documents, including a full Financial Report. His request was accepted by President Wong who asked that it be placed on the January VAC Meeting Agenda.

Sec'y. Noetzel gave a brief report on **VAC Website changes/updates**, and on **VAC Correspondence & contacts** since precious meeting.

A. - President's REPORT on NOMINATIONS reported out from the Nominating Committee.

President Wong opened this section by asking **Nominating Committee Chair, Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez**, to Report on the proceedings of the Committee.

Commissioner (and Nominating Committee Chair) Eduardo Ramirez then reported on the work of the Committee (i.e. Commissioners A. Alfidi; S. Noetzel; E. Ramirez, and A. Rose), at its sole meeting held one hour prior to the General VAC Meeting. Chair Ramirez then formally announced the official Nominations of the Committee, as follows:

[illegible]

Commissioner John Caldera
Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez.
(Comm. S. Noetzel, declining Nomination)

Commissioner Anthony Alfdi
Commissioner John Caldera
Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez
(Comm. Amber Rose, declining Nomination)

Commissioner Stephen Noetzel

President Wong then accepted the Report of the Nominating Committee and announced the results as Official Nominations. After reiterating the Nominating Committee [Presidential Candidates as Commissioners Caldera and Ramirez](#), he opened the floor for further nominations, for the office of President. Comm. Baldonado offered a Nomination for President, for Commissioner Wallace Levin; however Comm. Levin declined, with his thanks. Hearing no further response, President Wong closed nominations for President (for this meeting) and continued by opening the floor for further nominations for the office of Vice-President.

Comm. Levin raised a **Point of Order**, asking if it was appropriate for a Nominee to appear on a ballot for more than one office in the same election. As the By-Laws do not address the situation, **clarification was provided by the City Attorney, Mr. Snodgrass** suggested that the potential for election to more than one office could be resolved by holding individual elections. In that case, if a "dual Nominee" was elected to one Office, that **Nominee would then withdraw from the ballot for any other office** on which his/her name appeared. **President Wong** then stated that when administering the January elections, the first vote would be for President. After that, Nominated candidates not voted to the Presidency, would be carried on ballots for other offices, if so nominated. This solution was agreeable to all.

With that, **President Wong** reiterated the **Nominating Committee Vice-Presidential Candidates as Commissioners Affid.** **Caldera and Ramirez**. He then **opened the floor for further nominations**, for the office of Vice-President. **Comm. Levin** opened a **floor nomination for Comm. Crichlow, for VP**. After **Comm. Chrchlow** accepted the nomination, **President Wong** asked for further nominations. Hearing no further response, **President Wong** closed nominations for Vice-President (for this meeting) and continued by **opening the floor for further nominations for the office of Secretary**.

President Wong reiterated the **Eliminating Committee Candidate for Secretary (Comm. Noetzel)**, and opened the floor for further nominations, for the office of Secretary. Hearing no further response, **President Wong closed nominations for Secretary (for this meeting)** with an announcement that **prior to administration of an Officers Election**, at the January Meeting of the Commission, the floor would once again be opened to afford one last opportunity for additional nominations, for **ALL** offices, including opportunity for Self-Nomination.

B. – Comm. Gruwell introduction of future Agenda Item.

Comm. Gruwell introduced a suggestion that the VAC look into a proposal to support a VETERANS PAYROLL TAX EXEMPTION, for Post 9/11 Era Veterans. This idea would make the employment of veterans more attractive to potential Employers, by providing to them an EXEMPTION to the \$1500. In Payroll tax that they are now required to fund for each \$100k of employee payroll. Commissioners agreed to place this item on the next VAC Meeting Agenda for further development, discussion, and Potential ACTION VOTE.

Agenda Item 8 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS No discussion of Veterans Projects taken up at this meeting.

Agenda Item 9 – REPORTS on ONGOING ISSUES.

A – Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Liaison **Comm. Thompson** reported that the next Calif. EDD Sponsored **JOB FAIR** has now been identified as the **16th of MAY 2012**, and it will be held in the War Memorial Veterans building. Further planning for this major event continues.

B - Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Ramirez reported that the **VETERANS TOWN HALL MEETING** of Wednesday, the 30th of November. Once again drew a moderate number of Vets as well as Service Providers, but that it continues to grow each month. **See Agenda Item #14, Announcements, below.**

C - HOMELESS Veterans. No discussion of this issue taken up at this meeting.

Agenda Item 10 – Veterans Related LEGISLATION No discussion of this issue taken up at this meeting.

Agenda Item 11 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. No discussion of this issue taken up at this meeting.

Agenda Item 12 - Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Comm. Crichlow offered a Motion (on this Action Item), requesting official VAC Endorsement for a major 3/2/12 EVENT in the Veterans Building, called the Community Covenant VETERAN & MILITARY RESOURCE FAIR. (2nd by Comm. Levin). By way of discussion Sec'y **Noetzel** stated that if we all work together, this event has the potential to become the most significant Veterans Community Event in the War Memorial Veterans Building, in decades. The Community Covenant Planning Committee has placed significant Deposit Funds to secure virtually all the rentable space in the War Memorial Veterans Building, and there is a major ongoing effort to build the Resource and Job Fair portion of the event to a level that will bring together many government and corporate partners – ready to interview and hire job-seeking veterans. **Comm. Ramirez** suggested that it would be a great idea if the established Veterans Employment Committee (including the State EDD, etc.) could 'piggy-back' onto this event, and move their Job Fair (now planned for Mid-May) to be wrapped into the Major Event of the 2nd of March. Without further discussion, **President Wong** Called the Question. The subsequent vote for the VAC to ENDORSE the March 2, 2012 Community Covenant VETERAN & MILITARY RESOURCE FAIR. Sec'y **Noetzel** will follow through and author an Advice Letter to the Mayor and BOS, asking for their support and endorsement of the event as well.

Agenda Item 13 - OLD BUSINESS. No items listed at publication of Agenda.

Agenda Item 14 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

> **Comm. Ramirez** made a Reminder Announcement that the next Veterans Town Hall Meeting, will be on Wednesday, 12/21/11 (two Sessions; 9-11am and 5-7pm), in Room 207 of the WM Veterans Building.

> **Comm. Crichlow** announced that the next Planning Committee Meeting for the 3/2/12 (newly Endorsed) Community Covenant VETERAN & MILITARY RESOURCE FAIR, will be in Room 207 of the WM Veterans Building, from 11:30am to 12:30pm on Wednesday, the 14th of December.

Agenda Item 15 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community, with particular honor to the approaching 70th Anniversary of the Invasion of Pearl Harbor, on the 7th of December, 1941.

Agenda Item 16 - ADJORNMENT

The VAC General Meeting of 12/5/11 was adjourned, by President Raymond Wong, at 7:19pm.

Minutes of the 12/5/11 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and APPROVED (as corrected) at the VAC Meeting of January 9, 2012.



MEETING AGENDA – S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission – General Meeting of January 9, 2012

10. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

11. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

15. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

16. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email ngetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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B. Current VETERANS PROJECTS:

President Caldera opened this Section with an announcement that at the next VAC Meeting he will appoint various Commissioners as Liaison Commissioners to various outside Commissions/Agencies/Organizations. He requested that individual Commissioners contact him with their areas of interest for such appointment.

Ramirez: Get more Federal Agencies into the building.

C. Veterans EMPLOYMENT:

Comm. Thompson reported that the 22nd Annual VEC/EDD JOB FAIR, has now been set for Wednesday the 16th of May, 2012, from 10am to 4pm at the War Memorial Veterans Building. He announced that there will be a Planning meeting (for the event) on 1/19/12.

D. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Ramirez reported on his TOWN HALL MEETING of 12/21/11. He stated that he will be broadening his efforts in this area by forming a partnership with Mary Ellen TERVANO, Chair of the Veterans Collaborative, a group formed to bring together numerous veterans resource agencies. He stated that the title of his monthly meetings will now become the VETERANS TOWN HALL/COLLABORATIVE, and the long-term goal will be to establish such a group in every county in the State.

Comm. Ramirez also reported that he is now seeking membership on the new California Inter Agency on Veterans, and will be reporting on progress in the future.

E. HOMELESS Veterans.

Comm. Gibbs reported on the next East Bay Stand-Down, a large event to benefit Bay Area Homeless Veterans. He stated that a new goal for the 4-Day Event will be to offer (for the first time), a number of actual Housing Options to transition vets from Homeless to Housing. A Planning Meeting for the Stand Down is has scheduled for 1/17.

Agenda Item 10 – Veterans Related LEGISLATION

Comm. R. Wong referenced his Legislative Report Email wherein he recounts 4 different pieces of legislation that were successfully passed into State Law.

President Caldera then opened a discussion on the fact that our ANNUAL REPORT includes five (5) distinct Advice Letters and/or Resolutions that the Commission forwarded to City Government for action, and the Mayor and Board of Supervisors took action on only ONE such issue, with no response whatsoever on the remaining four. He suggested the establishment of a Committee on Veterans Legislation be formed to address this problem and work to find ways to encourage more action from City Government on our Legislative Advice Letters. Thus the Committee on Veterans Related LEGISLATION, was formed, with Comm. Alfidi appointed as Chair. (See Agenda Item 8, above).

Comm. Levin then spoke of an Important new Legislative Initiative Introduced by Congresswoman Jackie Speier, recently introduced as House Resolution 3435 under title: Sexual Assault Training Oversight and Prevention Act. Comm. Levin requested that the Commission study this legislation and place it on the February Meeting Agenda as a potential Action Item. Comm. Levin further suggested that as an additional Agenda Action Item, the VAC consider sending a letter to the President of the BOS asking how and when the Commission can expect Increased Action in response to our Advice Letters.

Agenda Item 11 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING. No further discussion as this item was covered under Agenda Item 8 – Commission GOALS AND PLANS. (above)

Agenda Item 12 - ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Comm. Ramirez pointed out that Commission appointments for three sitting Commissioners expire at the end of January. President Caldera polled the subject Commissioners as to their plans. Comm. Alfidi announced that he has already submitted his application for re-appointment. Commissioners Gibbs and Dara Wong stated that they are considering re-appointment.

Agenda Item 13 – (Honors Report) and 14 – (Adjournment)

13. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

14. AJORNMENT. Meeting Adjourned at 8:12pm

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12. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

Potential Action Item: Sec'y Noetzel to submit Motion and RESOLUTION for VAC support in advocating for addition of a VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building.

13. NEW BUSINESS

- > Establish a SFVAC Mentorship Program
- > Explore interest in hosting a Veterans Ball

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities**15. Honors Report and Moment of Silence:** In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.**16. AJORNMENT**

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Agenda Item 12 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

Secretary Noetzel opened discussion on the Draft Resolution that he had earlier distributed on an **Agenda Action Item** calling for VAC support in advocating for the addition of a **VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER** in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building. Sec'y Noetzel showed how this new initiative ties in earlier VAC support for the WholeVet Program, and other Health and Wellness goals of the Commission, and offered a MOTION seeking formal support for the Resolution. Comm. Crichlow stated that the Directors of the Veterans Administration Medical Center at Ft. Miley are interested in this plan as they have launched new programs to deal with the Health and Wellness of area veterans after recognition that many veterans struggle with diet, nutrition, obesity, cardio, and respiration deficiencies. Moreover, Comm. Crichlow reports that the VA Leadership are currently seeking an off-site location for development of such a Health, Wellness and Fitness Center at an OFF-SITE location, and most importantly, funds for development of such programs have already been identified!

Comm. Crichlow then offered a Second to the Motion as stated by Sec'y Noetzel, *but added a Friendly Amendment to specifically add the VA Medical Center at Ft. Miley as a partner in the Planning Meeting described in the Resolution.* Comm. Levin reminded the Commission that the American Legion War Memorial Commission (ALWMC) is the sole entity that is empowered to bring Building Use Plans to the Board of Trust for consideration. Sec'y Noetzel agreed however pointed out that Board of Trustees VP, General Michael Myatt has made a point of asking younger veterans in the building *"What would YOU like to see us do with this facility?"*. Sec'y Noetzel added that he has every intention of bringing the very same **RESOLUTION** to the ALWMC for THEIR endorsement and approval AND that he intends to initiate a **PETITION** (as referenced in the Resolution) to gain numerous signatures from San Francisco and Bay Area Veterans in support of the construction of such a Fitness and Wellness Center in the WM Veterans Building. President Caldera then called for a vote on the MOTION to endorse and support the subject Resolution (amended to include the aforementioned VA facility). *The Motion passed unanimously and the Resolution in support of Construction of a Fitness and Wellness Center in the War Memorial Veterans Building is now official VAC Policy.*

Agenda item 13 - NEW BUSINESS

SVFAC MENTORSHIP PROGRAM. President Caldera again introduced the concept of a **MENTORSHIP PROGRAM** within the Commission. He suggested that experienced Commissioners (i.e. those who have already served for a few years) could take on Mentorship of one or more of the newer Commissioners. He provided some examples of how this might work. The concept will not be a formally mandated Commission Goal, but is established as a Voluntary Program. To that end he invited any Commissioner who is interested in participating in a Mentorship Program (either as a Mentor or as a trainee) to contact him privately on the matter. He will bring it up on a future Agenda if interest is expressed.

VETERANS BALL. President Caldera also revisited his vision for a **VETERANS BALL** or another such Major Event to honor the Veterans of the City. He suggested a potential time-frame to be around Veterans Day, 2012. He again solicited suggestions and/or expressions of interest (on this matter) be brought to him in private. If no one follows up on the idea it will likely not be suggested again during this term.

Agenda item 14 - ANNOUNCEMENTS.

By way of a special ceremony to announce and congratulate Commissioner Anthony ALFIDI on his recent promotion for his old rank of Major, to the elevated rank of Lt. Colonel, Comm. Levin presented a CAKE for Commissioners to share in celebration. Comm. Alfidi graciously thanked Comm. Levin and the Commission.

Comm. Ray Wong announced that on Friday, the 17th of February, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is hosting a VOICE OF DEMOCRACY Ceremony/event at 7:30pm at Mission High School. The event is a Patriotic Speech Contest for high school students. Commission members are welcome to attend.

Comm. Rose announced that the Veterans Student Alliance at City College of San Francisco will host a Women's' Veteran Forum on both Thursday the 23rd of February, and again on Monday, the 27th. Details available on the Alliance Website.

Agenda Item 15 - (Honors Report) and 16 - (Adjournment)

15. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

16. AJORNMENT. Meeting Adjourned at 8:22pm

Minutes of the 2/6/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of March 5, 2012.

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Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

Expectations of SVAC Committees.

Potential Action Item: Roll-Call Vote on moving the SFVAC meeting to SF City Hall.

The documents represent a financial paper trail (acquired from S.F. Grants for the Arts) for the subject events.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

Comm. Baldonado to report on progress of House Bill 210, which the VAC supports (by its RESOLUTION of April 4, 2011. **Potential Action Item** for Motion to seek support from City of S.F. Government for an additional Resolution requesting (that) Senator Feinstein initiate introduction of a **Mirror Bill in the US Senate.**

Sec'y Noetzel to Report on progress of the February **RESOLUTION of VAC support** for addition of a **VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER** in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building, including related Correspondence and **Passage of Mirror Resolutions from additional Commissions and Veterans Groups**. Sec'y Noetzel also to expand support for this proposal with **(Action Item) MOTION** to incorporate a **PETITION OF SUPPORT** to the Resolution passed last month.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Potential Action Item for Motion In support of a proposal for a San Francisco LGBT Veterans Memorial Grove.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at email HYPERLINK "<mailto:noetzel@pacbell.net>" noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

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Several Commissioners took time to express their opinion that finding meeting space within City Hall was imperative to the viability of the VAC. Pres. Caldera announced currently available DATES of availability of the primary City Hall Hearing Room (416); those being the FIRST TUESDAY of each month, or the 3rd TUESDAY. Unfortunately at present the YOUTH COMMISSION meets in that space on the First Monday of every month. President Caldera said that he is currently looking into the possibility that the Youth Commission might consider giving up their 'First Monday' use of 416 in favor of an alternate date, but could not speculate on the likelihood.

Sec'y Noetzel expressed his personal view that retention of the 'First Monday' meeting schedule was more important (to him) than the eventual Meeting Space Location. Comm. Levin pointed out that Commissioners sought appointment to the VAC partially on the knowledge that meetings were held on First Monday Night of the month.

After considerable further discussion, **Comm. Levin** pointed out that while finding a 'new home' should be accomplished within the next 3 months (or so), however we should not rush to make a decision until all pertinent information was available.

President Caldera then agreed to **TABLE** this matter until all pertinent information was acquired, and further requested that *each Commissioner notify him if there are (any) SPECIFIC evenings of the week that they would not be available for regular meetings.*

Agenda Item 3 – OLD BUSINESS: Veterans Day Parade

President Caldera initiated discussion on the documents distributed last month; specifically:

- > A 62 page document titled: VETERANS DAY PARADE FINANCIAL DETAILS for the years 2009, 2010 and 2011, and
- > A 32-page document titled: MEMORIAL DAY EVENT FINANCIAL DETAILS for the year 2011 (only).

He reminded the Commission that the documents represent a **financial paper trail** (acquired from S.F. Grants for the Arts) for the subject events, and that they had been **distributed for information purposes**, and to indicate the **amount of work** (and associated costs) involved in **planning and arranging both the Presidio Memorial Day Event, as well as the Veterans Day Parade.**

Sec'y Noetzel stated that he had studied the documents thoroughly and aside from noting that the Memorial Day document covered information for the year 2011 only....**he saw no reason to criticize any of the financial data therein**, but rather **complimented** Comm. Levin on his handling of associated costs for the annual Memorial Day event – and even more particularly for insuring that expenses for the last Veterans Day Parade were reasonable in every aspect, and *included no pay-out to anyone who worked on parade planning or direction.*

President Caldera asked if there were further comments or suggestions with respect to this matter, and hearing none considered the REVIEW of the provided documents closed.

Agenda Item 4 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Comm. Crichlow began her primary report on the 3/2/12 Community Covenant Resource and Job Fair by thanking all those who helped make the day a success, and by reporting that while the Mayor's Office and Board of Supervisors did not come through with the promised pre-Event publicity, **BOTH entities were well represented at the event itself. Mayor Lee** was represented by **Mr. Bevan Duffy** who spoke to bring greetings and compliments from the Office of the Mayor, and **BOS President David Chiu** spoke to do the same on behalf of the entire Board. **Comm. Crichlow** reported that over 400 participants attended the day-long event, and that the building was filled with productive activity throughout the entire day.

Comm. Ramirez (another member of the event Planning Committee) added his thanks, and provided some primary statistics, stating that **some 55 vendors** (i.e. **Service Providers**) attended and participated, including **some 25 Employers**. Additional Resource vendors included **tables for all Bay Area Colleges and Universities** (public and Private), and **within the Corporate ranks, numerous Résumés** were circulated; **Initial employment Interviews conducted** (including **2 veterans "hired on the spot"**), and **at least 6 veterans were signed up for VA services**. In short, an extremely successful Event, by any standard of measurement.

Comm. Thompson reported that planning for the 5/16 Veterans Employment Committee/EDD Job Fair were continuing 'on track', and that they expected to present another successful full-day event for the benefit of area veterans – in the War Memorial Veterans Building, on the 16th of May.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Comm. Ramirez reported that the VA is currently holding a series of meetings with regard to new programs effecting veterans needs in the areas of Health and Wellness.

He also reported that he is now active as a member of the new **State of California Inter Agency on Veterans Issues** and recently went to Sacramento where the group announced a comprehensive plan for coordination of veterans services in **Housing, Education Employment, and Health**. Owing to his attendance at these meetings he delegated responsibility for running the last veterans TOWN HALL MEETING to **Comm. Crichlow**, who reported successful meetings on the 29th of February.

Comm. Crichtlow also took the opportunity to announce the **Re-Start of the WholeVets** program, now operating under slightly modified protocols, starting on the 10th of April.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Comm. Gibbs reported that plans for the next East Bay STAND-DOWN to serve homeless vets continue, for the 13th – 15th of September 2012, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds.

Agenda Item 5: Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Comm. Baldonado reported on progress of House Bill 210, which the VAC supports (by its RESOLUTION of April 4, 2011. He mentioned that House Bill 210 currently has some 88 co-sponsors in the lower House, but what is needed now is a companion Bill initiated within the US Senate.

Comm. Noetzel then made a MOTION that we pass a SECOND RESOLUTION on this matter, to Advise the City Government of San Francisco to support a US SENATE version of the House Bill, so that this matter can move forward to passage. (Comm. Baldonado 2nd). In discussion Comm. Levin suggested that said letter should include copies to both California US Senators (i.e. Feinstein & Boxer). With minimal further discussion, a vote was taken and the MOTION to pass a Second Resolution, urging the US Senate to Initiate its version of the Fairness to Filipino Veterans PASSED. (with all Yea votes save Abstention by Commissioners, D. Wong, and R. Wong).

Agenda Item 6 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in WM Veterans Building Remodel Plan.

Sec'y Noetzel reported on progress of the February RESOLUTION of VAC support for addition of a VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building has now evolved to a JOINT RESOLUTION in that it has, by this date, been fully endorsed by no less than THREE additional Veterans organizations, including...by vote at its meeting of 21 February 2012, unanimous passage by the AMERICAN LEGION WAR MEMORIAL COMMISSION. Also at that meeting the accompanying PETITION was launched, and at this point the petition continues to be circulated and numerous veterans have signed in support of the Resolution. Comm. Noetzel then made a MOTION calling for VAC support of the Petition as a tool to support the Resolution. (2nd Comm. Baldonado). In discussion Comm. Levin asked if the City Attorney has approved this Petition Strategy. Comm. Noetzel replied 'not yet' and agreed to amend his MOTION to add "pending approval by the office of the City Attorney". Comm. Ramirez asked to see a copy of the Resolution/petition. Copies were distributed to all. On review, Comm. Ramirez contended that management of the VA Center (Ft. Miley) was not aware of this effort and their support could not (at this point) be assumed. After considerable additional discussion on the Petition, President Caldera agreed that there are items in this issue that still required resolution and clarification and with that he ruled that the MOTION shall be tabled until such time as all outstanding questions are resolved.

Agenda Item 7 - NEW BUSINESS

Proposal to support development of a San Francisco LGBT Veterans Memorial

President Caldera introduced this proposal as an Action Item seeking support of the VAC in ongoing efforts to develop the subject Veterans Memorial in the Castro area of San Francisco. After further information on the continuing groundwork for the project was described, Comm. Noetzel made a MOTION that the VAC endorse and support this project with an Advice Letter to City Government to that effect. (2nd Comm. Levin). After brief discussion a VOTE was taken and the MOTION for VAC endorsement and support for the establishment of the LGBT Veterans Memorial PASSED (with all Yea votes save Abstention by Comm. Gibbs).

Agenda Item 8 - ANNOUNCEMENTS.

> Comm. Crichlow reminded all that the ongoing AMVETS program to feed Homeless Veterans every Sunday (in the Veterans Building) is continuing, and that volunteer effort to help in this service is needed and much appreciated.

> Comm. Towers announced that Swords to Plowshares is supporting a two-day Business and Application Development Competition called "Hackathon". It will be held at ADOBE Corp. in S.F. on the 24th and 25th of March. Details available on Swords to Plowshares website.

Agenda Item 9 - (Honors Report) and 10 - (Adjournment)

9. **Honors Report and Moment of Silence:** In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. **AJORNMENT.** Meeting Adjourned at 8:30pm

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, April 2, 2012 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

President John Caldera, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval **Action Item**

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 5 March, 2012 (Action item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Caldera to report on meetings with various city officials, and a Report on meeting with the San Francisco Office of Citizens Complaints.

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Alldil to report on his efforts on behalf of Commission.

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel to report on new Commission Correspondence, Website Changes and misc. Secretarial duties.

D. Committee Reports:

Bylaws Committee Chair. Noetzel to Report on Committee Meetings.

Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report.

2. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Guest Patrick DiChiro (CEO of Thunder Factory) will present his concept and plan for development of a Iraq Vets Welcome Home Parade here in S.F. **Potential ACTION ITEM.**

B. Guest Patrick Watkins to present his concept and plan for development of an Interactive Virtual Veterans Memorial at the War Memorial Veterans Building. **Potential ACTION ITEM.**

3. OLD BUSINESS.

Contingency plans for SFVAC meetings during the San Francisco Veterans War Memorial Building retrofit.
Potential ACTION ITEM.

4. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Comm. Thompson (& others) to Report on planning for the 5/16 Veterans Employment Committee/EDD Job Fair

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

Brief Report from Liaison, Comm. Ramirez on most recent TOWN HALL MEETINGS.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Sec'y Noetzel to Report on progress of the February RESOLUTION of VAC support for addition of a VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building, including related Correspondence and Passage of Mirror Resolutions from additional Commissions and Veterans Groups.

7. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Potential Action Item** for Motion in support of a proposal for a San Francisco LGBT Veterans Memorial Grove.

2. **Potential Action Item** for Resolution on issue of Obesity within Veterans Community.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

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Agenda Item 5: Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Comm. Alfidi, Chair of the Veterans Legislation Committee had no new information in this area at this time.

Agenda Item 6 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in WM Veterans Building Remodel Plan.

Sec'y Noetzel reported that there were no new recent developments with respect to the **JOINT RESOLUTION** in support of the development of plans for a **VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER** in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building.

Agenda Item 7 - NEW BUSINESS

Proposal to support development of a San Francisco LGBT Veterans Memorial

President Caldera reported on progress on this initiative which was passed by the Commission last month. After a series of challenging communication efforts, **President Caldera** is now seeking an opportunity to present the proposal for a **San Francisco LGBT Veterans Memorial** at the next board meeting of MUMC (Merchants of Upper Market/Castro) and will report again after that meeting. No further action at this time.

Initiative to address Chronic Obesity within the Veterans Community.

President Caldera then introduced another new issue for consideration by the Commission, that being the **problem of Obesity** within the veteran's community. He distributed a 16-page document which started with his **DRAFT RESOLUTION** calling for establishment of an **Obesity Awareness Day in San Francisco**. In addition, the document includes a full array of documentation regarding the severity of this problem, including (but not limited to):

> **Obesity within Veterans Community higher than general population.**

> **Information on new VA Weight Management program (known as) MOVE!**

> **Connection between Obesity and PTSD.**

> **Patterns of Addiction to prescription drugs among veterans being treated for PTSD, Obesity, Weight Management.**

President Caldera advised the Commission that he is currently including the initiative for establishment for an **Obesity Awareness Day** in **San Francisco** at all meetings with **San Francisco Supervisors**.

Comm. Crichlow suggested that that perhaps **First Lady Michelle Obama** might be "copied in" to an Advice Letter to City Leaders with respect to establishment of a **San Francisco Obesity Awareness Day**.

Comm. Alfidi suggested that the introduction of our support for a **Fitness Center** within the War Memorial Veterans Building might well be included in the **Resolution**. **Comm. Noetzel** agreed and **President Caldera** agreed to amend the draft to include this element. Other Commissioners suggested consolidation of some of the 'Whereas' portions of the original Resolution Draft. With that, **President Caldera** TABLED any action on the matter until next month when the **Resolution** will be re-introduced with inclusion of all suggestions, as above.

Agenda Item 8 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comm. Ramirez announced that the **Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs** will be visiting **San Francisco** on **Wednesday, the 2nd of May**. **Comm. Ramirez** is working with others to develop an ambitious itinerary for this important visit. In addition to a visit to the **VA Med. Center** at **Ft. Miley**, itinerary suggestions include a visit to the **War Memorial Veterans Building** (Swords to Plowshares offices? **American Legion?** **ALWMC?**) and hopefully an opportunity to meet with **City Officials**. He asked for **suggestions/input** for the **Itinerary**, which will be disseminated when finalized.

Comm. Ramirez also announced that the **LULAC Convention (League of United Latin American Citizens)** will be held on **May 8-10 in Sacramento**. The event will include a **Military Service component**.

Agenda Item 9 - (Honors Report) and 10 - (Adjournment)

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of **American Armed Service members** who have made the ultimate sacrifice in **ALL wars and conflicts**, plus the passing of **homeless veterans** and recent suicides within the **veterans and armed services community**.

10. AJORNMENT. Meeting Adjourned at 7:21pm

Minutes of the 4/2/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of April 7, 2012.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, May 7, 2012 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

President John Caldera, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval **Action Item**

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 4 April, 2012 (Action item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Caldera to report on meetings with various city officials and update on the creation of an LGBT Veterans Grove.

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Alfidi to report on his efforts on behalf of Commission.

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel to report on new Commission Correspondence, Website Changes and misc. Secretarial duties.

D. Committee Reports:

Bylaws Committee Chair. Noetzel to Report on Bylaws Committee.

Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report.

2. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Guest Bevan Duffy to make presentation on his efforts as director of HOPE (Housing Opportunity, Partnerships and Engagement), and its potential for collaboration with the Veterans Community.

3. OLD BUSINESS.

A. Contingency plans for SFVAC meetings during the San Francisco Veterans War Memorial Building retrofit.

Potential ACTION ITEM.

B. Resolution on issue of Obesity within Veterans Community. **Potential Action Item.**

4. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Comm. Thompson (& others) to Report on NEW DATE for Veterans Employment Committee/EDD Job Fair

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

Brief Report from Liaison, **Comm. Ramirez** on most recent TOWN HALL MEETINGS of 4/25/12 and on the 5/2 San Francisco visit of the California Director of Veterans Affairs, and on the upcoming LULAC Convention in Sacramento.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Sec'y Noetzel to Report and distribute copies of recent VAC letters regarding Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Sec'y Noetzel to Report on progress of the February RESOLUTION of VAC support for addition of a VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in the Retrofit Plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building, including related Correspondence and Passage of Mirror Resolutions from additional Commissions and Veterans Groups.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of SVAC Endorsement of Support for initiative to name US Naval ship THE USS HARVEY MILK.

Potential Action Item.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 7, 2012

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by **President John Caldera** at 6:07pm, starting with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by **Comm. Noetzel**

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Alfidi, Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Dacumos, Gibbs, Guy, Levin, Noetzel, Ramirez, Thompson, Towers, Wilkerson, D. Wong, R. Wong. (15)

Absent: Comm. C. Gruwell (no notice, unexcused,)

Note: with the 3/3/12 Resignation of Comm. Amber Rose, Commission strength now at 16 active members, 1 vacancy.

Attending Guests: Ellison Horne, Latonia Dixon, Bevan Dufty, JeanChas Morris, Jim Dorenkott, Nathan Dowds, Ann Weeby, Jeffrey Taylor, Leo Madrid, Raz Razwick, (Note: No City Attorney in attendance.)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. Baldonado; 2nd, Comm. Dacumos. Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

The Draft Minutes of the April 2, VAC meeting (by Sec'y S. Noetzel) were reviewed. **Comm. Towers** made **MOTION** to accept Minutes as written. (2nd- **Comm. Crichlow**). Without further discussion or correction a Vote to accept **April 2, 2012 VAC Meeting Minutes**, as written, passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Each of the Meeting guests (as listed above) introduced themselves and expressed ongoing interest in the proceedings of the Commission

Agenda Item 1 - Officers Reports

President's Report: President Caldera presented a short report on the project to establish creation of an **LGBT Veterans Memorial Grove** near the **Castro MUNI Station**. He reports that several business associations in the Castro District are developing support for this project.

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Alfidi reported that American Legion has scheduled a **Joint Posts Hearing** at the War Memorial Veterans Building on 5/21/12. The hearing will address the **significant VA Claims backlog here in the Bay Area**. Local **Directors of the VA, and Representatives of the offices of Congressman Jacki Speler** are scheduled to attend, and attending veterans will have **opportunity to speak out on this important issue**.

C. Secretary's Report; Secretary Noetzel reported that by use of a Cover Letter, to transmit to Mayor Lee and all members Board of Supervisors, TWO Important Advice Letters signed by President Caldera. They are:

> A 4/25/12 letter to BOS President David Chlu on the subject: ***Resolution in support of Senate Companion Bill to match House Version of Filipino Veterans Fairness Act***, and,

> A 4/30/12 letter to Mayor Ed Lee on the subject: *Resolution is support of a Fitness and Wellness Center in the War Memorial Veterans Building.*

Note: Subject letters were authorized by the SFVAC in recent meetings.

Sec'y Noetzel also reported on **VAC Website Updates**, which include an announcement of the 5/15/12 Career Fair at St. Mary's Cathedral, and full info on the 5/28/12 Memorial Day event at the Presidio.

D. Committee Reports: Bylaws Committee Chair, Noetzel reported that the Bylaws Committee met for the 3rd time just prior to the meeting and that additional progress on suggested Bylaws Changes were agreed upon, but more work must be done at future Committee meetings before full Report to the Commission can be achieved.

Agenda Item 2 – Commission GOALS AND PLANS

President Caldera introduced Social Guest **Bevan Duffy, Director of HOPE (Housing Opportunity, Partnerships and Engagement)**. Mr. Duffy thanked the Commission for an opportunity to present to the Commission, Mayor Lee's program to address the issue of homelessness in San Francisco (in general), and more specifically the potential for collaboration within the Veterans Community – to address the Issue of Homeless Veterans. Mr. Duffy reported that despite the expected placement of some 75 currently Homeless Veterans in the new Otis Street facility expected late this year, this will not solve the housing problem for the estimated 300 Homeless Veterans in the city. He announced a new initiative based on a collaboration with the Home Depot Foundation whereby a potential for an additional 200 units of Housing might be made available to Priority Applicants, such as Homeless Veterans and their families, in the Spring of 2013. Mr. Duffy also spoke of the potential for using special (City) Tax Incentives for Corporations, in exchange for commitments to hire Veterans. Mr. Duffy closed his presentation with announcement of 2 new and unique Initiatives that he is currently working on, those being:

[illegible]

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 7, 2012 Page 2 of 3

- > Use the 311 system to administer a 'reservations system' to guarantee overnight housing for homeless citizens, and
> Development of an innovative program to match appropriate homeless citizens with local Pet Adoption programs.
- The Commission thanked HOPE Director Duffy for his fine presentation with a round of applause.

Agenda item 3 – OLD BUSINESS

A. Future SFVAC Meeting Location: Potential Action Item: President Caldera reported that the City Hall Space Management Planner (Mr. Rowland Lane) recently informed him that the schedule for monthly availability of Conference Room 416 was currently 'in flux'. He therefore reluctantly Tabled further discussion on this item until the June VAC Meeting when new schedules will hopefully be available. As part of this Agenda item, President Caldera expressed his strong opinion that the SFVAC should seek to acquire permanent Office Space within City Hall. After some discussion, Comm. Noetzel made a Motion to authorize the President to seek office space within City Hall. (2nd by Comm. Baldonado). After further discussion on the potential for use of office space for Commission Business, the Question was called and a Vote was taken. The Motion carried (with Abstentions by Commissioners Towers, Crichlow, and Levin). By this majority vote, President Caldera is now authorized to seek Office Space for the SFVAC, in City Hall.

B. Resolution on the issue of Obesity within the Veterans Community. (Potential Action Item). President Caldera thanked the Commission for their input and sensitivity to this delicate Health Issue. He then distributed copies of three (3) Draft Resolutions for consideration and discussion, those being (1) the original Caldera Resolution, (2) an edited version of that draft, by Sec'y. Noetzel, and (3) a Draft Resolution by Supervisor Scott Wiener. Commissioner Towers pointed out that since all of these Resolutions advocate for the establishment of an official Obesity Awareness Day, the issue should be taken up by the SFVAC Committee on Legislation. He then offered a Motion to refer this item back to Committee. (2nd by Comm. Levin).

In opening discussion, Comm. Levin offered opinion that we would be well advised to steer clear of the word 'Obesity' in favor of a Resolution to promote "Good Health Practices" (i.e. Nutrition, Diet, and Fitness).

Comm. Noetzel stated that there is no reason to "shy away" from the term "obesity", as the issue is now in full discussion in the media, including a major new NPR program addressing Obesity in America. He also mentioned that in addition to Supervisor Weiner, other Supervisors are ready to move on a Resolution to establish a San Francisco "Obesity Awareness Day". President Caldera added that his Resolution is written in strict Clinical Language, specifically to avoid any potential for offending sensibilities on the question of Obesity.

Comm. Crichlow added a suggestion that the Resolution should include support for the established Veterans Health Administration Programs on Health/Obesity Issues

Comm. Alfidi expressed support for the Motion to refer the issue to the Legislative Committee

Comm. Towers expressed opinion that Referral (back to Committee) would Empower the Committee system and thereby provide an expanded voice of the Commission on the issue.

Comm. Levin recommended that prior to discussion of a new issue with members of the BOS or City Administration it might be preferable to establish an official position of the VAC on the matter.

Comm. Gibbs pointed out that the issue was not new to the Commission, and that Minutes of the April Meeting clearly indicate extensive discussion and consideration of the issue.

Comm. Ramirez expressed opinion that the Commission "should be working together" on this (and other) issues, rather than unilateral discussions that might be seen as Personal Agenda items.

After a full discussion, President Caldera Called the Question and a Vote was taken on Comm. Towers' Motion to send this issue to Legislative Committee for further development. The motion passed unanimously. The issue to advocate for establishment of an Obesity Awareness Day in San Francisco will now be considered by the Legislative Committee.

Agenda Item 4 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT and Job Fairs

Comm. Thompson reported that the long-planned Veterans Employment Committee/EDD Job Fair has been moved to THURSDAY the 21st of JUNE. From 10:00am to 2:00pm. The 22nd annual Job Fair will be held in the War Memorial Veterans Building. The May Planning Meeting for the event is scheduled for 12 noon on Monday the 14th of May.

b. Veterans TOWN HALL Meetings (and CalVet Contingency visit to San Francisco)

- > Comm. Ramirez reported that the latest Town Hall Meeting (on 4/25/12) once again showed continuing growth and success
> Comm. Ramirez also reported on the 5/2/12 visit to San Francisco by the Secretary of the California Department of
Veterans Affairs (aka CalVet), Mr. Peter Gravett, along with key members of his administration, including Ms. Lindsey Wathen
Deputy Secretary, Women Veterans Affairs, and Mr. Lee Gutierrez, Deputy Secretary Minority Veterans Affairs.
Comm. Ramirez reported that Ms. Wathen held a successful forum on issues of particular interest to Women Veterans (with
over 20 female veterans attending).

The visit by the Ca/Vet contingency also included:

- A tour of the War Memorial Veterans Building, including a visit to the Veterans Resource Center
- A visit to the office of the Mayor.
- A meeting with the Director, and key Staff members, of the VA Medical Center at Ft. Miley

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Lead Commissioner Gibbs reported that planning continues for the East Bay Veterans "Stand-down". This 4-day Event (at the Alameda Fair Grounds), on **September 13 through 16, 2012**, will provide primary services for all bay-area Homeless Veterans.

Agenda Item 5: Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

After distributing copies of a **Letter to Board of Supervisors President David Cilu (Re: Resolution in support of Senate Companion Bill to match House Version of Filipino Veterans Fairness Act, dated 1 May, 2012; signed by President Caldera)**, Sec'y Noetzel noted that copies of the letter were sent to **Senators Feinstein and Boxer**, in the hope that they might take action and draft the requested Senate Bill. **Comm. Baldonado** thanked the VAC leadership for following up on this important matter.

Agenda Item 6 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

VETERANS FITNESS AND WELLNESS CENTER in WM Veterans Building Remodel Plan.

After distributing copies of a **Letter to Mayor Lee (Re: Resolution in support of Construction of a Fitness and Wellness Center in the War Memorial Veterans Building , dated 30 April, 2012; signed by President Caldera)**, Sec'y Noetzel noted that separate copies of the letter were sent to each of the 11 members of the Board of Supervisors, under a 'cover letter' that detailed all recent business of the Commission. Since the thrust of the letter is to enlist the help of City Government in facilitating a Joint Meeting of "all relevant parties with a stake in the future of the War memorial Veterans Building", the plan is to follow-up on this request to generate support for such a meeting.

Agenda Item 7 – NEW BUSINESS

Proposal for SFVAC Endorsement of Initiative to name US Naval ship THE USS HARVEY MILK.

In opening discussion on this **potential Agenda Action Item**, **President Caldera** distributed a 13-page packet of information relevant to this issue, including:

- A Draft Resolution (written by **Comm. Caldera**), titled: **Resolution supporting the Christening of a US Navy Ship after San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk, and**
- A Draft Resolution (written by Supervisor Scott Weiner), titled: **Resolution urging the Secretary of the Navy to christen a ship as the "USS Harvey Milk".**

After some introductory remarks by **President Caldera**, **Comm. Levin** offered a Motion that we consider endorsement and support for the **Weiner Resolution**. (2nd. **Comm. Noetzel**). In subsequent discussion, **Comm. Alfidi** spoke up to question the naming military ships after politicians, pointing out that a potential result might be that a US Naval vessel exists in divisive controversy. He suggested that if the Commissions' intent was to honor a veteran of the LGBT community, a **more appropriate historical figure might be Baron von Steuban**, an opened homosexual who served the US valiantly during the Revolutionary war in many capacities, including Chief of Staff to General George Washington.

After considerable further discussion, the Question was called and a vote was taken. The Levin Motion Passed with a strong majority voting Yea, **Comm. Alfidi** voting Nay, and one abstention. As a result, the President will author an Advice Letter informing Supervisor Wiener and City Government of SFVAC support for the Wiener Resolution.

Agenda Item 8 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

- > Announcement from **Comm. Ramirez**: On **5/8/12**, there will be a **Forum on Veteran Mental Health issues at the SF VA Medical Center**.
- > Announcement from **Comm. Crichlow**: On **5/9/12** **Swords to Plowshares** will host it's 4th Annual 'SHOUT!' event, in support of **Art created by Women Veterans**. (6:00pm to 10:00pm at the Women's Building, 3543 18th St. S.F. CA 94110)
- > Announcement from **Comm. Levin**: On **5/10/12** there will be a ceremony to name the 'horseshoe drive' (between Opera House and War Memorial Building) **In honor of George Schultz** for his contributions to the success of the Veterans War Memorial at that location.
- > Announcement from (guest) **Glen Razwick**: On **5/13/12** there will be daylong Symposium on the subject: "**Challenges and Solutions in the Addiction Field Today**". Location is the UCSF Campus at Mission Bay. Full details available at: <http://conta.cc/June13Symposium>
- > Announcement from **Comm. Crichlow**: On **5/16/12** **CalVet** will run a 'Walk & Roll' event in support of Homeless vets and Health promotion. Details available on VA2K website.
- > Announcement from **Comm. Wilkerson**: **Volunteers are needed at the VA Hospital** at Ft. Miley, to escort patients (often in wheelchairs) to areas within the vast Medical Center. Contact Volunteer Services Office at the VAMC for full info.
- > Announcement from **Comm. Levin**: On **5/28/12 (Memorial Day)**, the **144th Annual Presidio of San Francisco Memorial Day** event will start at 10:00am. Full details and Event Program will be available on the official website: www.presidio.gov/calendar
- > Announcement from (guest) **Latoria Dixon**: On **7/3-4/12** the Northern California Veterans Art Guild will present an **Art Opening**, welcoming Military Women and Men Back Home from Iraq. Further details TBA.

Agenda Item 9 – Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community. **10. A.JORNMENT**. Meeting Adjourned at 7:57pm

Minutes of the 5/7/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of June 4, 2012.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION
City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, June 4, 2012 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

President John Caldera, Presiding

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval **Action Item**

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 4 May, 2012 (Action Item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Caldera

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Alfidi resignation from SFVAC.

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel to report on new Commission Correspondence,

D. Committee Reports:

Bylaws Committee Chair, Noetzel to Report on Bylaws Committee .

Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report.

2. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Process to Elect new Vice President for SFVAC.

3. OLD BUSINESS.

A. Plans for SFVAC meetings during the San Francisco Veterans War Memorial Building retrofit.

Potential ACTION ITEM.

B. WELLNESS AWARENESS WEEK RESOLUTION Potential ACTION ITEM.

4. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Comm. Thompson (& others) to Report

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Report from Comm. Alexandra Crichtlow on developments in this area.

Report from Liaison, Comm. Ramirez on most recent TOWN HALL MEETINGS of 4/23/12

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Discussion only

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Discussion only

7. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Discussion only

8. NEW BUSINESS

Smoking at the VA.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

10. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

11. AJORNMENT

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Pres. Caldera then distributed copies of a List of Committees and Committee Expectations, and noted that the **Bylaws Committee is the only VAC Committee that has met (to date)**. He also polled Commissioners for a volunteer to Chair the Committee on Legislation after the resignation of former Chair, Comm. Alfidi. There were no volunteers.

Comm. Levin then spoke to announce his resignation as Co-chair of the EVENTS & Community Relations Committee, stating that Co-Chair Comm. Wilkerson will do a fine job as sole Chair. Comm. Towers spoke to mention that the Bylaws Committee was working on new bylaws provisions that would disband committees that were inactive for a designated period of time.

Sec'y Noetzel then pointed out that the 'Committees' document distributed includes the **Committee Expectations of Pres. Caldera**, and that these Committee Expectations were **never discussed or voted on by the entire Commission**. He noted in particular that reference to the development of Public Hearings was a **goal that must be fully discussed and authorized by the entire Commission** before announcement.

Comm. Baldonado asked if he had been appointed to any Committee. Pres. Caldera then repeated his appointment of Comm. Baldonado to the Committee on Veterans Legislation.

A. ACTION ITEM. *Process to Elect new Vice President for SFVAC.*

President Caldera opened the floor for Nominations for the Office of Vice President, to fill the position for the remainder of the 2012 Term of Office.

- Comm. Levin nominated **Comm. Alexandra Crichlow**. She accepted the nomination.
Comm. R. Wong nominated **Comm. Eddie Ramirez**. He accepted the nomination.

Hearing no further nominations, **President Caldera then closed the nominations process for this meeting with an announcement that nominations would again be opened prior to an ELECTION for Interim Vice President, during the September VAC meeting.**

A. Potential ACTION ITEM. Plans for SFVAC meetings during the San Francisco Veterans War Memorial Building retrofit.

Pres. Caldera announced that he had recently heard from City Hall Space Allocation Manager (Mr. Rowand Lane), that the only viable time-slot that City Hall Hearing and Conference Room (416) is for the evenings of the Second Tuesday of each month. After some discussion on the matter, Commissioners were asked to speak up if any had problems or difficulties with a rather long-term switch of the VAC Monthly Meeting Schedule to the Second Tuesday of each month. Sec'y Noetzel spoke to announce that he did, as his Veterans for Peace group met on that schedule; nonetheless he would vote to accept the available time and space offer to insure that the VAC had permanent and viable meeting space going into the future. After some further discussion Comm. Levin made a MOTION that we instruct the President to accept the offer to schedule future VAC Meetings in Room 416 of City Hall, during the available time-slot of 4:30pm to 9:00pm on the Second Tuesday of each month, as soon as it is available. (2nd by Comm. Ramirez). A vote was held and the motion passed unanimously. President Caldera is thus authorized to move forward to make such arrangements.

Pres. Caldera re-opened discussion by distributing copies of his latest DRAFT of his latest RESOLUTION (to advocate for establishment of an Obesity Awareness Day in San Francisco) for consideration. Comm. Towers suggested that this issue had already been sent to the VAC Committee on Legislation for further study. Pres. Caldera replied that after the resignation of Comm. Alfidi, that Committee had no Chair and therefore he brought it back for the entire Commission to consider. He mentioned that the Obama Administration is already planning announcement of a FITNESS and WELLNESS week in November, and suggested that we might advocate for designation of a San Francisco "week" to dovetail with the Federal initiative. After some discussion, Sec'y Noetzel raised a question with regard to the specific relevancy and benefit to the Veteran's Community (as opposed to the general population), for support of a WELLNESS AWARENESS WEEK RESOLUTION. Comm. Crichlow suggested that the role of the VAC in matters such as this might best be geared to support for initiatives taken by the city, that happen to benefit the Veterans Community. Comm. Ramirez recommended that we leave this initiative aside in favor of concentrating our issues that were earlier defined as our Primary Goals. Comm. Towers suggested that as this item had already been assigned to Committee for further study, it was up to the Committee on Legislation to meet to do its job. Pres. Caldera then once again tabled this issue for re-assignment to the Legislation Committee with a strong recommendation that they (and all other established Committees) actually meet to conduct their legitimate business.

Agenda Item 4 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT. Comm. Thompson distributed copies of a new flyer for the 22nd annual Veterans Employment Committee/EDD Job Fair now scheduled for the 21st of June, 2012 on the 2nd floor of the Veterans Building. He added that there are now well over 20 area Employers signed on to participate. The event will include a Resume Writing Workshop and seminars to help veterans find jobs.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE. Comm. Alexandra Crichlow spoke to remind Commissioners that many veterans suffer from "hidden disabilities" such as depression and social anxieties. She suggested that there might be a role for the Commission to find a way to address this problem. Comm. Dacumos also spoke out on this issue, and suggested that the Veterans Community would be well advised to collaborate with the Performing Arts community to find ways to heighten awareness of the debilitating injuries arising from PTSD and TBI. Comm. Noetzel suggested that outreach to the Arts Community is a legitimate role for the Events and Community Relations Committee – but once again, they would have to become an active, working Committee to make any progress in this area. Comm. Levin suggested that the development of an updated "Master Reference List" of agencies that might be of help to veterans in need of specific Social Services might also be a valid Commission Project. Comm. Ramirez reported that after a year of contacts with service providers at his monthly TOWN HALL MEETINGS, he now has a "stack" of cards and pamphlets from a wide variety of agencies, companies and individuals that might well be incorporated into such a publication. Comm. Noetzel mentioned that the Bylaws Committee is currently developing suggestions to establish a Social Media Liaison position within the Commission, and that the Services Directory idea might well be within the job description of the new position.

B. HOMELESS Veterans.

> Pres. Caldera distributed copies of a 1-page article from the June American Legion Magazine titled: "Report: Homeless female vets at risk". The article highlights the little-known severity of this problem.

> Comm. Towers reported on the Mayor's new "Homes for Heroes" program, including a new "100-day Initiative" to find apartment owners who are willing to accept HUD Housing vouchers as rent payment for homeless veterans.

Agenda Item 5: Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Discussion only. (Covered under least portion of Agenda item 4B, above)

Agenda Item 6 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

Guest Jerry Sapiro, an attorney/advocate for Veterans Rights/usage of the Veterans building spoke to urge all in attendance to attend and participate in the June 6 Historic Preservation Commission Hearing, at 1:30pm in City Hall Room 400. Veterans and the public will have opportunity to voice their disagreement with the current Board of Trust plans for Post-renovation Space Allocation within the building. Current plans to expand non-veteran space allocation include (but are not limited to);

- > Reduction of Amer. Legion District 8 HQ space.
- > Construction of a new Office of the City Arts Commission on north side of the 3rd floor.
- > Allocation of new building space for an Opera Costume Shop & Storage Facilities.

Mr. Sapiro pointed out that at the same time the Board of Trust was increasing allocation of Arts Community space within the building, they were denying space allocation for legitimate use by Veterans and Patriotic organizations as required by Charter. Comm. Noetzel pointed out that despite the fact that the Veterans Community had (for many years) under-utilized the building, the planned Reduction of Space for veterans use comes exactly at a time when MORE space and resources should be made available if we are going to successfully contend with a new wave of veterans returning from active duty at this time. Mr. Sapiro ended his presentation with another plea for all in attendance to participate in the 6/6 hearing.

Agenda Item 7 – VETERANS ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES (Covered under Agenda Item 9, below).**Agenda Item 8 – NEW BUSINESS**

Smoking at the VA. Pres. Caldera introduced the idea of a Grounds Clean-up Day to "police" trash and cigarette butts at the Ft. Miles VA facility. Further discussion postponed in interest of time.

Agenda Item 9 – ANNOUNCEMENTS

- > Guest Latonia Dixon announced that on Tues. the 3rd of July, 2012 there will be a VETERANS ART FAIR on the 2nd floor of the Veterans building, from 3pm to 8pm. The event is sponsored by AmVets Post 34 & American Legion Post 315.
- > Comm. Thompson announced that on Sat. the 21st of July there will be a VETERANS BARBEQUE EVENT at the VA Facility at Ft. Miles. Veterans and families all welcomed to attend.
- > Comm. R. Wong announced that on Sun. the 29th of July, the VFW 91st Div/Chinatown Post 4618, will celebrate its 100th Anniversary with a dinner banquet at the 4-seasons Restaurant. Tickets are \$35. And all are invited.

Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. **ADJOURNMENT.** Meeting Adjourned at 8:39pm

Minutes of the 6/4/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (after minor corrections) by majority vote of the VAC at the General Meeting of 8/6/12

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, August 6, 2012 6:00pm
MEETING AGENDA

President John Caldera, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval **Action Item**

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 4 June, 2012 (Action item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Election of Vice President: **Action Item.**

President Caldera to administer public election of Vice President to serve for remainder of 2012 term.

Procedure to include Last Call for additional nominations, including self-nomination, followed by a public 'paper ballot' election.

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. **President's Report;** President Caldera

B. **Vice President's Report:** Newly elected V.P. to address Commission

C. **Secretary's Report:**

> Secretary Noetzel to report on efforts to contact BOS Rules Committee Chair regarding open positions on Commission. **Potential Action Item.**

> Secretary Noetzel to report on Semi-Annual Attendance Report recently submitted to Office of the Mayor.
Discussion and Potential Action and Censure regarding repeated un-excused absence.

3. Committee Reports:

> Bylaws Committee Chair. Noetzel to Report on Bylaws Committee progress.

> Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report (if any).

> Discussions on the viability of Committees as appointed during this term with **Potential Action to disband inactive Committees.**

4. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Open discussion on Commission Goals/Plans at half-way point of 2012 term.

5. OLD BUSINESS.

A. Discussion of Presidents filing of Complaint regarding American Legion member (and attorney) currently the subject of disbarment proceedings, and associated Email. **Potential Action Item.**

B. Confirmation of schedule & details of moving VAC meetings to City Hall.

C. Discussion on need for new Commission Mailing address after shut-down of Veterans Building.
Potential ACTION ITEM.

6. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Floor opened for Reports/updates by Commissioners.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Discussion only

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Discussion only

7. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Discussion only

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

10. **Honors Report and Moment of Silence:** In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

11. AJORNMENT

August 6, 2012

Veterans' Affairs Commission - August 6, 2012

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of August 6, 2012

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Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by President John Caldera at 6:00pm, starting with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Gibbs, Guy, Levin, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, D. Wong, R. Wong. (13)

Absent: Comm. D. Dacumos (excused, medical), Comm. C. Gruwell (no notice, unexcused.)

Note: Commission strength now at 15 active members, 2 vacancies.

Attending Guests: Mr. Greg Corrales, Mr. JeanChas Morris, Mr. Lee Burnette (Note: No City Attorney in attendance.)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. Levin, 2nd, Comm. R. Wong. Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

President Caldera opened discussion on the Draft Minutes of the previous meeting (i.e. 6/4/12), as written by Sec'y S. Noetzel. Pres. Caldera stated that he had discussed the proceedings of the meeting with the office of the City Attorney and that it was his belief that actions involving the CENSURE of the President were not in order. He requested that approval of the Minutes therefore be TABLED, until such time as a legal opinion on this matter could be made. Comm. Noetzel objected, stating that the MINUTES were a factual record of what actually transpired at the June Meeting, and as such, must reflect all that transpired at that meeting. Comm. Levin also added that History cannot be changed, and made a MOTION to approve the Minutes, as written (Seconded by Comm. Ramirez). In discussion Comm. R. Wong requested a minor correction (for the record) regarding the hosting organization of a 7/29/12 dinner event. That request was added into the Motion to Approve. The question was called and a subsequent vote to Approve the Minutes of the 6/4/12 meeting of the VAC (as corrected) was APPROVED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Each of the Meeting guests (as listed above) introduced themselves and expressed interest in the proceedings of the Commission. Guest Greg Corrales stated that his specific interest involved an Email exchange with the President, and looked forward to a discussion in that regard.

Agenda Item 1 – Election of Vice President

ACTION ITEM. Process to Elect new Vice President for SFVAC.

President Caldera opened this Agenda Item with an announcement that Comm. Crichlow had WITHDRAWN her nomination for the office of Vice President, leaving the Commission with only one nominated candidate (i.e. Comm. Ramirez). He then opened the floor for one last opportunity for Nominations for the Office of Vice President. Hearing none he closed Nominations and asked the Secretary to administer the election. Sec'y Noetzel distributed individualized ballots, which were marked by each Commissioner present at the meeting. He tabulated results and announced that Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez had been elected unanimously as the new Commission Vice president for the balance of the 2012 Term.

Agenda Item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report: President Caldera opened his report by stating that the Commission is dysfunctional and "currently in Civil War". He stated that he has filed complaints with both the Ethics Commission and the Human Rights Commission regarding what he considers to be Human Rights or Ethics Violations by Commission members. He added that he has also discussed his grievances against specific Commission Members with Ms. Nicole Wheaton of the Mayors office. Commissioners were uniformly stunned, offended and outraged by these revelations and spoke out in turn with profuse objection to his activities, asking exactly what his complaints were. At this point Pres. Caldera distributed a photo-copy (Black & white) of several photos that he claims portrayed Comm. Levin being "disrespectful" to women. Again, the Commission was uniformly outraged. Comm. Guy

(the subject of one of the photos) asked President Caldera why he had not contacted her over the past 2 months to ask her personally if she had any objection to the behavior of any Commissioner. She stated that the photo in question depicted nothing whatsoever, and that she had no complaint whatsoever, moreover, to the contrary, she appreciated the support that all VAC Commissioners had extended to her. She stated that she was certainly no party to any complaint against Commissioner Levin, who was depicted in conversation with her at an event on December of 2011. President Caldera then apologized to Comm. Guy, however he continued to claim that his complaints to the various agencies had validity, and that we would be hearing from said agencies regarding his complaints/accusations.

Comm. Dara Wong asked that the minutes reflect the fact that she personally observed a second incident that President Caldera claims to depict Comm. Levin "being disrespectful" to the wife of former Commissioner Thompson during a Memorial Day event. She stated that if anything, the reverse was the case and that Comm. Levin was on the receiving end of the disrespect, and that the still photos submitted as 'evidence' by President Caldera prove nothing whatsoever.

Agenda Item #2A, President's Report, (continued)

Comm. Noetzel added that the personal Email he sent to colleagues about his reaction to the cold reception extended to a group of veterans speaking in Public Comment before the board of trust, in no way qualified as a "Loose Cannon" statement and that he was proud of his statements in that private Email. He suggested moving on from these ugly personal charges by the President, leave the personal vindictive behind, and get back to issues of relevance to Veterans.

B. Vice President's Report: Newly-Elected V.P. Ramirez simply stated: "Obviously, we have much work to do.

Let's get to it".

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel began with a report on recent Correspondence. He cited an Email that he had received (as a 'Copy to' recipient) from Nicole Wheaton of the Mayor's Office wherein she asks President Caldera to provide certain documentation regarding his filing of a complaint against an American Legion member (and attorney). Sec'y Noetzel asked if Pres. Caldera had provided the requested information. President Caldera replied that he had done so.

> Sec'y Noetzel discussed an Email exchange that he had with the office of Supervisor Jane Kim, (Chair of the BoS Rules Committee). Essence of the exchange was to inquire when the Rules Committee might schedule a hearing to interview candidates for the four currently opened (BoS appointed) seats on the Commission, particularly in the we have already been advised of at least five (5) qualified veterans who have made application for appointment. In answer, we are advised that the Rules Committee will schedule such a hearing: "...as soon as we return from summer recess, in September".

> Sec'y Noetzel then reported on his recent submittal of a Mid-year Attendance Report as requested by the Office of the Mayor. In making his report he noted that Comm. Chris GRUWELL had missed the last three consecutive Meetings of the VAC, and 5 of the 6 meetings of the VAC in 2012 (not counting his un-excused absence tonight, his 4th consecutive absence). Sec'y Noetzel indicated that over the past 18 months, Comm. Gruwell has missed 11 of 18 scheduled meetings. Sec'y Noetzel then distributed copies of a Draft Resolution that he had authored in this matter. The Resolution characterized this absence record as unacceptable called for probationary status for Comm. Gruwell. It further mandated that the next Gruwell absence would trigger an Agenda Action Item for the following VAC meeting, to consider a MOTION to recommend (to the Mayor), the Dismissal of Commissioner Gruwell for lack of minimal participation in the proceedings of the Commission. As this matter was on the current Agenda as a Potential Action Item Comm. Noetzel made a Motion to adopt this Resolution and Plan of action. In Seconding the Motion, Comm. Levin stated that it was in accordance with Current Commission Bylaws in the area of Attendance and Attendance Reporting. Pres. Caldera stated that in recent meetings staff of the Office of the Mayor, he was given to understand that Commissioner Gruwell was considering resigning from the Commission, but that this should have no bearing on the current Motion. Comm. Wilkerson asked if it might be appropriate to contact Comm. Gruwell to advise him of the concerns of the Commission. Pres. Caldera said that he had already communicated with Comm. Gruwell and asked him to increase participation within the Commission, but had received no response. The Question was called and a vote taken. The Motion to adopt the Resolution of Censure passed unanimously, save one abstention. The President will follow-up with action in accordance with the provisions of the Resolution.

Agenda Item 3 – Committee Reports President Caldera called for Committee Reports, noting that once again that to his knowledge there have been no Committee Meetings of any formed Committees, save the Bylaws Committee.

Bylaws Committee Chair. Noetzel then reported on the progress of the Bylaws Committee, stating that in its most recent meeting (earlier in the evening), the Committee had voted to submit its Committee Endorsed Document of Suggested Bylaws Changes to the full Commission for its review and eventual consideration for Ratification. He then distributed to each Commissioner, envelopes containing all required documents for their review of current Bylaws, and the proposed changes, deletions and additions as developed by the Bylaws Committee in 5 meetings over the past 6 months. He asked all Commissioners to review these documents over the next two months and be prepared to discuss the potential for adoption and Ratification in the November VAC meeting.

Comm. Guy announced that she would like to schedule a meeting of the WOMENS CAUCUS, an appointed Committee of the VAC. Sec'y Noetzel announced that he will help her with advice on Public Notification procedures/details, to schedule up an initial committee meeting

At this point, President Caldera asked Sec'y Noetzel if he wished to move forward with the Agenda Item:

- > Discussions on the viability of Committees as appointed during this term with Potential Action to disband inactive

Committees.

Sec'y Noetzel suggest that this item be tabled for a future meeting as provisions for the disbanding of inoperative Committees are addressed in the proposed Revised Bylaws. Pres. Caldera tabled the item.

Comm. Levin asked if the Proposed Bylaws included rules for the establishment of Committees, pointing out that Pres. Caldera had recently established, without consultation with the Commission, a new Committee for Board of Trust Liaison. Sec'y Noetzel suggested that the referenced Committee formation and appointments are invalid, but as the issue is not on the current Agenda, it must be taken up at a later date. (End of Item 3, Committee Reports).

Agenda Item 4 – Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Open discussion on Commission Goals/Plans at half-way point of 2012 term.

Pres. Caldera opened the floor for discussion on this matter. Sec'y Noetzel suggested that the President should write a letter to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors. The purpose of the letter would be a Review of the Advice Letters that this Commission has written to them over the first half of this year, and ask them for a response on each. Comm. Ramirez asked if the Secretary could provide a summary of those issues for future Action, and Sec'y Noetzel said that he will provide same to Comm. Weeby who will serve as Acting Secretary in his absence as he will be on extended out-of-town travel soon, and will miss the VAC meetings of September and October. Comm. Baldonado mentioned that there is an urgency to this Review Effort as the current session of the US Congress is nearing its end, and our Advice Letters include a request for the City Administration to advocate for further progress on the Faimess to Filipino Veterans Bill. Pres. Caldera suggested that Comm. Baldonado might add his own letter (on that issue), in addition to the "Review Letter" sent by the President. Discussion on this matter ended with agreement that the President will write a letter to the City Administration, asking about the status of each of the Advice Letters that the VAC has written since the start of 2012.

Agenda Item 5 – OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Presidents filing of Complaint regarding American Legion member (and attorney) currently the

subject of disbarment proceedings, and associated Email. Potential Action Item. Comm. Levin opened this discussion by distributing copies of the April VAC meeting Agenda to indicate that this issue was initially brought up by President Caldera under Presidents Report under subtitle: *A. President's Report: President Caldera to report on meetings with various city officials, and a Report on meeting with the San Francisco Office of Citizens Complaints.* He then re-distributed copies of a document originally distributed by President Caldera on the issue. The document includes a record of an email string between Mr. Caldera and Mr. Greg Corrales, on the subject of the legal difficulties of American Legion member LaRue Grim. Comm. Levin again asked Pres. Caldera why he went to the Office of Citizens Complaints? (and) Who did he file a complaint against? (and) and for what reason?

Pres. Caldera responded that this issue is inappropriate as an SFVAC Agenda Item and that it was only on the Agenda at the request of Comm. Levin. Comm. Towers said he agreed with that assessment, but that since Pres. Caldera had placed it on the April Agenda to begin with, the follow-up questions are legitimate. Pres. Caldera then answered Comm. Levin's question by stating that he had filed a complaint against (attorney) LaRue Grim. When asked if this was done in his capacity as President of the SFVAC, he answered "No... the complaint is signed by me as Commander of an American Legion Post."

Comm. Towers then asked if that was the case, why did he then place it on the April VAC meeting Agenda for discussion? Pres. Caldera replied that he felt it was important to inform Commissioners of the SFVAC about the impending Dis-barment of attorney and Legion Member LaRue Grim.

Comm. Levin then asked if (guest) Mr. Greg Corrales could be heard on this issue, as he had something important to contribute. He introduced Mr. Corrales as a Vice Commander of A.L. District 8, a (Marine) Veteran of the Vietnam conflict and a long time member of the San Francisco Police Department, serving last as a Captain. Commissioner Levin then asked Captain Corrales if he knew who Mr. Caldera had filed a complaint against, with the SF Office of Citizens Complaints. Capt. Corrales stated: "He filed a complaint against ME". Comm. Levin pointed out the obvious discrepancy and asked Capt. Corrales to further explain.

Capt. Corrales again referred to the Email string between himself and Pres. Caldera, which clearly indicates that despite the inflammatory tone of Mr. Caldera's correspondence, he had continually answered "Let us agree to disagree on the subject of LaRue Grim". He then stated that soon thereafter he (Mr. Corrales) received official notification from the Office of Citizens Complaints, that a complaint had been filed against HM (by Mr. Caldera) for "Email Bullying". He stated that the record of the Email string speaks for itself, and it indicates that he had been conciliatory throughout, and that Mr. Caldera was all too obviously the bully in the exchange. He stated that the matter was then transferred to Police Department Internal Affairs, and that upon further investigation they concluded that there was no improper conduct on the part of Captain Corrales.

At this point Sec'y Noetzel asked the Commission to once again read the Email string between President Caldera and Capt. Corrales; a document originally distributed by Pres. Caldera. He stated that the tone displayed by President Caldera was shameful throughout, particularly his last statement where he suggests that Capt. Corrales should "spend more time at the gym working up a sweat and less time pushing your opinions around the American Legion and the SFPD would be better served".

A. Discussion of Presidents filing of Complaint regarding American Legion member (and attorney) currently the

subject of disbarment proceedings, and associated Email. Potential Action Item.

Comm. Levin then made a MOTION that President Caldera be ordered to write a letter to all parties to the entire issue, to clarify that his statements and actions regarding Mr. Grim

and Mr. Corrales were completely his own as an individual, and in no way reflected the opinions or position of the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission." (Second by Comm. Noetzel). Hearing no further discussion on the issue, Pres. Caldera called the question. A subsequent vote resulted in a near unanimous mandate for President Caldera to write the letter as ordered. He stated that despite his abstention vote he will comply with the will of the Commission and write the letter.

B. Confirmation of schedule & details of moving VAC meetings to City Hall.

This Agenda item was covered in earlier discussion however President Caldera confirmed that we will continue "First-Monday-of-the-month meeting schedule in the Veterans Building through the balance of 2012. Our January 2013 VAC meeting will mark the start of our new "Second Tuesday" schedule as it will be held in Room 416 of City Hall, on Tuesday evening, the 8th of January, 2013.

C. Discussion on need for new Commission Mailing address after shut-down of Veterans Building. Potential ACTION ITEM. President Caldera announced that logistics negotiations with respect to our re-location in 2013 continued with Ms. Nicole Wheaton of the Mayor's Office, and that the establishment of an official Mailing Address for the VAC (starting in 2013) was part of that discussion and he was hopeful that a resolution would be reached well before the end of this year. (No Action required at this time).

Agenda Item 6 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT. Comm. Wilkerson stated that he would be willing to take on the role of Liaison in this area, but that he had nothing special to report at this time. He will have details on the 6/21/12 EDD Job Fair at a future meeting.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE. Comm. Alexandra Crichlow announced that she had recently enjoyed the camaraderie and company of fellow Commissioners Caldera and Noetzel in Rowing Machine Work-out sessions at the Club One fitness center in the Embarcadero. She also announced that she was working on establishment of a Women's Veteran group to be established under the WholeVet program that the Commission had earlier endorsed. Comm. Crichlow also reported on an unfortunate incident at an AM/VETS event that has resulted in some curtailment of the Homeless Vet Feeding Program run by AM/VETS on Sundays.

B. HOMELESS Veterans.

Comm. Gibbs reported on progress in planning for the East Bay Veterans Stand-Down, scheduled for the 13th thru 16th of September, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, in Pleasanton, CA. Comm. Gibbs mentioned that a new element in this year's event was the transport of incarcerated veterans to participate and receive much-needed direct services. He stated that event planners were expecting up to 500 veterans to attend and receive services, over the 4-day event, including younger vets from recent conflicts. This is a major undertaking aimed at direct assistance to area vets. Volunteers are needed and welcome. See Event Website at <http://www.eastbaystanddown.org/> for details on attending, volunteering, & more.

Agenda Item 7: Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

No meeting discussion in this area.

Agenda Item 8 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

No meeting discussion in this area.

Agenda Item 9 - VETERANS ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

Comm. Towers opened a discussion in this area by cautioning the Commission that in order to return to focus on issues of relevance to the interests and needs of the veterans of San Francisco the Commission Leadership must be more prudent in insuring that meetings do not drift into areas that may be interesting, but are not relevant. In short, he stressed that it is not needed, or helpful, to spend meeting time to explore every detail that happened at every organization, in the recent or distant past. Sec'y Noetzel offered agreement, stating that he was only interested in continued service with the Commission in 2013 if we can put the personal invective and minutia aside and get back to work on issues relevant to Veterans.

Comm. Ramirez then reported on the latest TOWN HALL meetings that he continues to host on the 4th Wednesday of every month. He said that attendance and interest continue to grow steadily as the word gets out to inform Veterans and Service providers that this is a comfortable hassle-free "one-stop-shop" to learn about available services to veterans.

Comm. Ramirez also announced that he is also working on development of TWO new events that he hopes to bring to the Veterans building. The first is a S.F. VETERANS FILM FESTIVAL, which will include screenings of at least four films, made for and about Veterans and Veterans issues.

The second event announced by Comm. Ramirez, was the planning for a VETERANS UNIVERSITY SUMMITT, which will involve bringing together leadership elements of Bay Area Colleges, and Universities with student Veterans, and Veterans Administration area directors with expertise on the New G.I. Bill Educational Benefits. While planning is still in development, Comm. Ramirez intends to bring these events to the Veterans Building before the retrofit closure. Finally, Comm. Ramirez announced that these events will be sponsored by a NEW American Legion Post (the Caesar Chavez Post) that he is currently organizing, and he will be seeking SFVAC endorsement for these events, once dates are selected

President Caldera then re-capped two VETERANS ART FAIR events that were recently sponsored by AL Post 315. The events were well attended and featured artworks in several media - all done by bay area veterans. He pointed out that such events serve as sterling examples of how the War Memorial Veterans Building continues to live up to its purpose in direct service to the San Francisco veteran's community. He thanked those who attended and supported the events.

Agenda Item 10 – NEW BUSINESS

No meeting discussion in this area.

Agenda Item 11 – ANNOUNCEMENTS

> Comm. Weeby announced that in Sacramento, on the 4th of October there will be a WOMENS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, hosted by CALVET WOMEN VETERANS. Full details on the Conference are available at the CA Dept. of Veterans Affairs website, at: <http://www.calvet.ca.gov/womenminority/Conference.aspx>

> Comm. Towers encouraged all to review the various veterans-related events currently featured on the Swords to Plowshares website, at <http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org/news-and-events/>

12. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community, and (as cited by Comm. Levin) the innocent victims killed and wounded in recent domestic attacks as they enjoyed the freedoms of our culture.

13. AJORNMENT Meeting Adjourned at 8:09pm

Minutes of the 8/6/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of September 10, 2012.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, September 10, 2012 6:00 PM

MEETING AGENDA

President John Caldera, Presiding

GOVERNMENT
DOCUMENTS
SEP 10 2012
SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval Action Item

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. *Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 6 August, 2012 Action item*

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Caldera

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Ramirez to report on his efforts on behalf of Commission.

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel is excused.

D. Committee Reports:

2. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Plans for the San Francisco Veteran's Day Parade. Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

3. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

A. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

B. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief Report from Liaison, **Comm. Ramirez** on most recent TOWN HALL MEETINGS.

Brief Reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

C. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief Reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

4. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

5. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of Veteran related events/activities

7. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, as well as the passing of homeless Veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and Armed Services community.

8. ADJOURNMENT

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DISABILITY ACCESS

The War Memorial Veterans Building (between Grove & McAllister Streets) is wheelchair accessible via front entrance (401 Van Ness). There is wheelchair accessible public parking nearby, including the underground garage at the north side of City Hall. The nearby BART/MUNI station (Civic Center) is wheelchair accessible as are nearby city bus lines and stops. For more Public Transit information services, call 415-923-6142.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of September 10th, 2012

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by President John Caldera at 6:00pm, starting with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In attendance for the meeting: Commissioners Baldonado, Caldera, Crichlow, Gibbs, Guy, Levin, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson.

Absent: Commissioners D. Dacumos, C. Gruwell, S. Noetzel (excused- travel), D.Wong (excused- travel), R.Wong (excused- travel).

Attending guests: John Alex Lowell, Nelson Lum, Leo Madrid, Chris Less, Michael Blackford, Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm Levin, 2nd, Comm Towers. Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting

Motion to accept minutes, of previous meeting as written, made by Comm Wilkerson, 2nd Comm Levin. Without further discussion, meeting minutes passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Each of the meetings guests (as listed above) introduced themselves and expressed interest in the proceeding of the commission.

Agenda Item 1 Officers Reports:

A. President's Report: President Caldera formally resigns as VAC Commission President but will remain on the commission. Allows Vice President E. Ramirez to step in to chair commission. Five minute adjournment called. Comm. Caldera excused himself from rest of meeting.

B. Vice President's Report: V.P. Ramirez takes over meeting as acting President and confirms process with Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass. V.P. Ramirez met with Nicole Wheaton in anticipation of first meeting as V.P. She suggested two areas for the commission to focus on to benefit veterans of the city: 1) Hiring practices of the city and county of San Francisco pertaining to veterans. 2) Issue of a Veterans court in San Francisco. Commission could take action to look into if this is viable in San Francisco. Would like to look into inviting key players to advise the commission on these two items. Also, started the first Cesar E. Chavez post of the American Legion. First Friday of every month at the War Memorial Building, hoping to generate interest in the building on Friday nights and is looking for suggestions.

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel is absent. Comm. Weeby is acting Secretary and taking notes.

D. Committee Reports:

Women's Committee Report: Comm Guy shared an update about the women's collaborative meeting in San Jose with Dep. Sec. Wathen. Comm Weeby shared details about the CalVet Women's Leadership conference and need for award nominations.

Agenda Item 2 Commission Goals and Plans:

A. Veterans Day Parade: Comm Levin shared flyers and Information about this year's parade on Sunday November 11th, 2012. If you have questions contact Comm Levin or Javier Tenorio. Interested groups need to fill out an application. ATTACHED. *Commission website needs to be updated with the parade letter and form.

Agenda Item 3 Current Veterans projects and reports on ongoing issues:

A. Veterans Employment

Comm Wilkerson reported that the committee has not had a meeting and he will be acting as head of the committee.

B. Veterans Health and Welfare

Comm Crichlow reported that Swords to Plowshares will have a dinner on November 7th. Also, the new veterans housing on Otis St will open on November 12th. For more information contact Swords to Plowshares Communication Director Colleen Corliss. Comm Towers shared that there are 79 rooms, all for veterans and the VA will be taking care of who goes in via HUD-VASH. The Swords to Plowshares is updated with Veterans Day information

Comm Ramirez reported on the Town Hall collaboratives. He has a student working under work study program money and is helping to organize information from the Town Hall. The 5-7pm veterans' town hall will not be

happening on Sep 26th due to observance of Yom Kippur. Both the morning session and How To Get a Federal Job Workshop will occur during their regular times this month.

C. Homeless Veterans

Comm Gibbs shared that the East Bay Stand Down is happening Sep 13-16. There are 4-5 county-specific courts at the Stand Down to help with ticketing, licenses, and legal issues. Comm Ramirez shared that he has information about Stand Downs happening in other counties, reach out to him if you want information.

Agenda Item 4 Veterans related legislation

Nothing to report

Agenda Item 5 War Memorial Veterans Building

Guest Nelson Lum, Chair of War Memorial Commission (WMC), shared that there will be a special meeting on Sep 17th. Nominations for the commission will be accepted on that day, he urged American Legion members to show up to ensure a quorum. The Veterans Building has a continuing struggle between the commission and trustees. Interpretation of rights and space is being evaluated and may end in litigation. The WMC opposes the retrofitting of the interior of the building and they are appealing the trustees decision. There is a meeting at City Hall on September 19th. If a San Francisco veteran wants to use the building he cautions that you get a sponsorship from the American Legion since the San Francisco Post is the only active veterans' organization left on the trust. July 1st, 2013 is when construction begins on the War Memorial Building. Most likely all organization will be moved out by April 30th 2013.

Acting President Ramirez will confirm VAC meeting time and location during construction during October's meeting.

Agenda Item 6 Announcements

- Guest Leo Madrid shared that during July's job fair there were lots of employer cancellations resulting in empty desks and employers were not hiring veterans. He only knows of one veteran that actually got a job that day. Comm Crichlow shared that at the Community Covenant veterans did get jobs. Guest Nelson Lum shared that in the future in order for employers to get tables at job fairs in the War Memorial building they should be required to hire at least one person. Comm Guy shared that there is rarely any follow-up after job fairs and it discourages people. Comm Ramirez suggested that perhaps this could be a requirement for next years Community Covenant.
- John Alex Lowell shared training from the Evangelical Lutheran Church on counseling tools for pastors or people in service before or after deployment. This information is available from the Evangelical Lutheran Church for free. Acting President Ramirez mentioned this was right on target with what was happening at the VA.
- Acting President Ramirez brought copies of Talk Listen Connect for everyone. This bilingual (English and Spanish) multimedia outreach program is designed to support military families with children between the ages of two and five who are experiencing deployment, multiple deployments, or a parent's return home changed due to a combat-related injury.
- Comm Levin shared that if anyone is interested in getting more information about the plight of the building the Trustees minutes for the last 10 years are available on the city's website. Agenda for upcoming meetings are also available.
- Guest Christopher Lee represents United Students for Veterans Health. He came to the VAC looking for recognition for his all-student organization that is using the VA volunteer training system to get students ready to volunteer at the hospital. They are recruiting volunteers and have 8-10 founding student board members that have been very successful. The organization is hosting an annual conference and speaker symposium to focus on Veterans outreach. Acting President Ramirez said he would reach out to Christopher to share information and resources.
- Comm Wilkerson shared that Ralph Gibson died a week ago and requested the VAC adjourn in his honor. Comm Crichlow stated that someone should let the Board of Supervisors know so they can honor his years of service on the Commission.

Agenda Item 7 Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community, and to our fellow commissioners and local veterans as well.

Agenda Item 8 Adjournment Meeting Adjourned. Next meeting is Oct 1st.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, October 1, 2012 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

President Eduardo Ramirez, Presiding

GOVERNMENT
DOCUMENTS DEPT

SEP 28 2012

SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 10 September, 2012 (Action item)

MOTION to approve moving Vice President Eduardo Ramirez to the position of President of the Veterans Affairs

Commission for the rest of 2012. And leaving the position of Vice President vacant until the next election in

January. (Action Item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

A. Briefing from the VA Veteran Justices Outreach Coordinator

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Ramirez

B. Vice President's Report: (No VP at this time)

C. Secretary's Report: In the absence of Secretary Noetzel Commissioner Ann Weeby to report in the capacity of Acting Secretary.

2. Committee Reports:

> Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report (if any).

3. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Open discussion on Commission Goals/Plans for the balance of 2012

B. What is the hiring policy for veterans in the City and County of San Francisco? Would like to see veterans get the same preference as the federal government where Veteran who meet the min requirements get hired non-competitively.

C. Propose to establish a Veterans Court in the City and County of San Francisco.

4. OLD BUSINESS.

5. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Floor opened for Reports/updates by Commissioners.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Discussion only

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Discussion on progress regarding establishment of new Commission Mailing address after shut-down of Veterans Building.

8. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Discussion only

9. NEW BUSINESS

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

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DISABILITY ACCESS

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Agenda Item 3 Current Veterans projects and reports on ongoing issues:

A. Veterans Employment

- > Comm. Guy reported that she got a job with Oakland's Vet Center.
- > Pres Ramirez conducted his How To Get a Federal Job workshop for 40 people, including 15 veterans at SFCC. He has an upcoming workshop at the Veterans Success Center with IAVA on 10/4/12.

B. Veterans Health and Welfare No comments

C. Homeless Veterans No comments

Agenda Item 4 Veterans related legislation

- Comm Towers reported on the Swords to Plowshare blog and shared handouts on veterans' legislation.
- Comm Towers was asked by Pres Ramariz to make additions to our website to include recent state legislation.
 - Comm Baldonado & Towers are going to follow up on the status our bill endorsing letter to the Board of Supervisors and let the commission know the status.

Agenda Item 5 War Memorial Veterans Building

Guest Leo Madrid shared that there is a meeting October 2nd discussing War Memorial Building updates. He also shared that membership, including veterans and their family members, is critical to the success of the American Legion.

Agenda Item 6 Announcements

- Comm. Towers shared that Swords to Plowshares has pushed back the opening of the Otis St. facility has Homeless Veterans will be moved into the facility in November.
- Schedule to move SFVAC meetings to City Hall in January. Meetings will be in ROOM 416 the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6pm. In November and December the room is available for committee meetings during our regular time on Nov 13th & Dec 11th. Comm. Levin shared that we need to decide how to use the space since it is a very large area for our commission. We may need to request tables to be set up. Comm Towers will visit and take photos and share with the commission.
- Since there is lots of information about veteran's events and issues in the city Comm Guy is going to make an RSS feed and share it with Pres Ramirez later this week.
- Comm. Caldera shared that local company Zynga has a partnership going with IAVA to donate money via this popular online game Mafia Wars.
- The physical address on our website is wrong.
- Pres Ramirez shared that his new Cesar E. Chavez post is looking for members.
- Veterans Day Parade: Comm. Levin shared that funding for the Veterans Day parade is from the Grants for the Arts which funds lots of local organizations and events, and this year's event is currently in the bottom 20% in grant awards amounts. He runs the event and stated that there is currently not enough money invested in Veterans Day events and would like to see the parade once again get greater funding. Comm. Levin also has event posters and handouts.
- Guest announced a Vet 2 Vet initiative that is interested in expanding to San Francisco and creating jobs and shared copies of the information
- Sat. Oct 13th Post 315 is hosting a Take Back the Night event at the War memorial Building. Comm. Caldera will e-mail the information to all commissioners.
- P.E.A.C.E. Museum is now installed in the War Memorial Building. Viewing is by appointment.
- Oct 20th First Annual Veterans Film Festival 12-6pm. Sponsored by the Cesar E. Chavez post.
- Last month Town Hall meeting collaborated with Disabled American Veterans and had over 50 organizations attend in September.

Agenda Item 7 Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community, and to our fellow commissioners and local veterans as well.

*Also honoring the 2000 casualties in Afghanistan as requested by Comm Levin.

Agenda Item 8 Adjournment Meeting Adjourned. Next meeting is Nov 5th.

Minutes of the 10/1/12 VAC Meeting written by Acting VAC Secretary ANN WEEBY, and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of November 5, 2012.

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of **October 1st, 2012**

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by **President Eduardo Ramirez** at 6:00pm, starting with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In attendance for the meeting: Commissioners **Baldonado, Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Levin, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, D.Wong & R.Wong** (10 Commissioners).

Absent: Commissioners, **Crichlow** (excused), **Noetzel** (excused- travel), **Gibbs, Gruwell, Wilkerson**.

Attending guests: **Natalie Purcell, Elizabeth Brett, Leo Madrid, Tom Huggett, Jon Hendricks, Deputy City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass, Eddie E. Cordero, Fulton Tyrone Hopkins**

Approval of Agenda

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Caldera, 2nd, Comm. Levin**. Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting

Motion to accept minutes, of meeting of **Sept. 10, 2012** as written, made by **Comm. Levin, 2nd Comm Dacumos**. With one correction meeting minutes passed unanimously.

Action Item

Motion made to approve moving Vice President **Eduardo Ramirez** to the position of **President of the Veterans Affairs Commission** for the rest of 2012, (and), leaving the position of Vice President vacant until the next election in January. Motion made by **Comm. Levin, 2nd Comm. Baldonado**, Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Brett & Natalie Purcell gave a presentation on behalf of the Veteran justice outreach program.

Agenda Item 1 Officers Reports:

A. President's Report: Nothing to report

B. Vice President's Report: Currently, no VP

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary **Noetzel** is absent. **Comm. Weeby** is acting Secretary and taking notes. **By-laws are on the agenda next month**. Please submit agenda items and speak up and participate to have your items on the upcoming agendas. **Sec. Noetzel** will be back for Nov's meeting.

D. Committee Reports:

Women's Committee Report: **Comm. Guy** shared she will have a meeting in November. Also, the **Women's Veteran Leadership conference** is in **Sacramento** on **Oct 4th**.

Agenda Item 2 Commission Goals and Plans:

What is the hiring policy for veterans in the City and County of San Francisco? Would like to see veterans get the same preference as the federal government where Veteran who meet the min requirements get hired non-competitively.

Comm. Levin researched and shared the veteran hiring process for the City of San Francisco, attached. He urged that we help remind the Board of Supervisors and Mayor about this and make sure the City & all the departments are enforcing the existing policies to assist veterans applying for city jobs. **President Ramirez** asked that the commissioners to do further research before we talk to the Board of Supervisors or ask for any changes to the existing policies.

President Ramirez challenged commissioners to get together outside of monthly meeting to do research and bring new topics and actions to upcoming meetings. This would include adding items to upcoming agendas and/ or inviting guests to present and educate the entire commission at upcoming meetings. He would like to see the commission tied into more veteran events happening around the city, including endorsing and supporting these events.

Old Business None

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, November 5, 2012 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

President Eduardo "Eddie" Ramirez, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval **Action Item**

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of October 1, 2012 (Action item)

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. **President's Report**; President Ramirez

B. **Vice President's Report**: (none – position vacant)

C. **Secretary's Report**: Secretary Noetzel to report.

2. Committee Reports:

> Chairman S. Noetzel of Bylaws Committee to report on Action Plan for adoption of revised Bylaws.
(See item 4, below)

> Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report (if any).

3. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

A. Open Forum on 2013 Goals & Plans. *Note: Individual Commissioners are encouraged to speak out on their views of what the VAC should work on in 2013. Discussion to include expectations for increased participation by ALL Commissioners as the VAC moves forward.*

4. OLD BUSINESS.

A. Consideration of new Commission **BYLAWS** as recommended by Bylaws Committee – followed by potential final adjustments and potential **VOTE TO ADOPT (ACTION ITEM)**

B. Report on status of planning for Veterans Day parade (Comm. Levin, lead)

C. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** on the Resolution of Censure (passed in August) with regard to the (non) Attendance record of Commissioner Chris GRUWELL.

D. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** on the status of the Veterans Court of San Francisco.

5. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Floor opened for Reports/updates by Commissioners.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area, and

REPORT on East Bay Stand-Down event

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Discussion only.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Discussion on latest developments in ongoing struggle to insure appropriate retention of building space and resources after retrofit remodel.

8. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Commissioners to report on activities of various Veterans Organizations.

9. NEW BUSINESS.

A. City Policy on Fee Exemption for Veterans Ignored. **Potential ACTION ITEM.** Guest: Mr. David Glass

B. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** on the status of Veterans Hiring Procedures for the City of San Francisco.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

11. **Honors Report and Moment of Silence**: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

12. AJORNMENT

This Document is Official Business of the VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION, City and County of San Francisco. As such it is part of the official PUBLIC RECORD of the City/County of San Francisco.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

Public records are covered under that State of California Brown Act, as well that the SUNSHINE ORDINANCE of the City of San Francisco. The 'Sunshine Act' assures that deliberations of City Business are conducted "before the people", and that City operations are open to the people's review.

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of November 5, 2012

Having achieved a Quorum, the meeting was called to order by **President Eddie Ramirez** at 6:05pm, starting with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners **Baldonado, Caldera, Gibbs, Guy, Levin, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, D. Wong, R. Wong.** (12)

Absent: Comm. A. Crichlow (excused, illness), Comm. D. Dacumos (excused, travel), Comm. C. Gruwell (no notice, unexcused.) **Note:** Commission strength now at 15 active members, 2 vacancies.

Attending Guests: Mr. Michael Maffei, Mr. Leo Madrid, Mr. George Saxton, Mr. Dave Glass, Mr. Mo Armstrong, Mr. JeanChas Morris, Mr. Jim Dorrenkott and Ms. Carole Adell. (Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was in attendance.)

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. 2nd, Comm. Wilkerson (2nd, Comm. Caldera Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of October 1, 2012 (as written by Acting Secretary Ann Weeby) made by Comm. Towers (2nd Comm. Baldonado). Without further discussion, Minutes for the October 1, 2012 VAC meeting passed unanimously.

- > **Guest G. Claxton** expressed his view that the veterans advocacy group Swords to Plowshares is not adequately supportive of the LGBT Community.
- > **Guest Jim Dorenkott** announced the Vet-to-Vet conferences and workshops scheduled for the weekend of Nov. 16-18.
- > **Guest Mo Armstrong** introduced himself and spoke about the work that he is now doing in Veterans Advocacy.
- > **Guest Carole Adell** introduced herself and distributed flyers providing information on Federal Legislation to provide protection against fraud with regard to the processing of Asbestosis claims.

A. President's Report: President Ramirez reported on his recent visit to the **San Bruno Jail** and his interaction with **Veterans** currently incarcerated there. He concludes that a **Veterans Court** would be of **great benefit** to both the Veteran population there, as well as to our community in general. He repeated his hope that working toward the establishment of such a court in S.F. would constitute a major effort for this Commission, in the 2013 term.

President Ramirez also reported on the success of the Veterans Film Festival recently held in the Veterans Building

B. Vice-President's Report: None, No VP at present time.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Noetzel reported that the BOS Rules Committee met on 11/1 to consider applications for opened seats on the SFVAC, but no decisions or recommendations were made as several of the applicants were unable to attend the hearing. They re-scheduled additional hearings for their next meeting, 11/15/12.

Note: Comm. Guy reported that she must regrettably RESIGN as chair of the SFVAC Women's Caucus, due to a heavy new workload on her new job. She said she would re-consider Committee participation in the New Year.

- Comm. Levin opened discussion with a question about the viability and room configuration of our new 'home' in City Hall, beginning in January. Commission agreed that some modification of room configuration might facilitate our meetings.
- Comm. Gibbs expressed his hope that we continue to make progress in effective advocacy for establishment of a **VETERANS COURT for the City of San Francisco**.
- Comm. Guy said she would like to see more effort to **bring together the various (existing) Veterans Advocacy groups and Organizations**.
- Comm. Ramirez introduced his hope to organize a **Veterans Summit** – to bring Veterans Program Coordinators from every college, University and Specialty school together, and to form a DATABASE to efficiently disseminate information important to the Veterans Community.
- Comm. Noetzel spoke of his hope that the SFVAC would concentrate on bolstering the efforts of the American Legion War Memorial Commission to **retain appropriate Building Use Space for Veterans, within the War Memorial Veterans Building after the Retrofit Closure**. He suggested that in 2013, we hold 3 JOINT MEETINGS, (with the ALWMC) to combine our efforts in this regard. He also proposed that it might be a good time to utilize our **Charter Authority to hold PUBLIC HEARINGS on this Issue**.

- Comm. Weeby expressed that she would like to see improvement of our visibility with an **Improved website** as a vehicle to reach out to area veterans and advise them of places and programs that they can receive assistance and benefits.
- Comm. Caldera expressed that he would like to see the VAC begin to **work with the City Department of Public Health**... to try to identify, the **LOCAL rate of suicide** – among our Veterans Community.
- Comm. Ramirez stated that he would like to see more concentration of effort, to **strengthen the voice of Women Veterans** in the next year – especially to build **Mutual Respect between male and female veterans**.
- Comm. Towers stated that he would like to **focus on the “do-able”** rather than set goals that are beyond our Charter.
- Comm. Levin suggested that the Commission would do well to select a **few primary issues** to work on.
- Comm. Caldera suggested we might organize one more Veterans Connect event in the building, prior to closure.
- Comm. Noetzel reminded the Commission that the **new leadership of the VAC** (as elected in January) **will determine the major thrust of the Commission Goals/Plans for 2013**, but that our collective input would help shape our Agenda for 2013.

Agenda Item 4 - OLD BUSINESS.

A. Consideration of new Commission BYLAWS as recommended by Bylaws Committee, and potential **VOTE TO ADOPT (ACTION ITEM)**. As Chair of the Bylaws Committee, Comm. Noetzel took the floor to review the work of the Bylaws Committee over the past half-year, and its proposal for a MAJOR REVISION of the SFVAC Bylaws, as distributed at the August VAC meeting. He asked Commissioners if there were any specific CHANGES that Commission members. Ramirez requests MOTION. Comm. Noetzel offers MOTION to ADOPT unchanged, the major Bylaws Revision as presented by the Bylaws Committee in August. (2nd, Comm. Towers). In discussion, Comm. Levin suggested that the propose Revisions be reviewed by the City Attorney to insure that there is no conflict with the City Code. Comm. Noetzel offered a view that the best way to proceed is to ADOPT the new Bylaws, and then await identification of any portions that the City Attorney might take exception to. Comm. Caldera raised a question with regard to Quorum. City Attorney Snodgrass clarified that any majority vote made by Commissioners attending a meeting that meets the Quorum Threshold, is binding. Comm. Noetzel again urged that the Commission take ACTION to move forward toward ADOPTION at this meeting. The question was called and President Ramirez requested that a Roll Call Vote be taken on the Motion. The motion PASSED with all 12 Commissioners voting to ADOPT, with none voting against and no abstentions. The NEW VAC BYLAWS, as recommended by the Bylaws Committee, are therefore OFFICIALLY ADOPTED.

B. Report on status of planning for Veterans Day parade (Comm. Levin, lead) Comm. Levin announced that all plans for the parade on Sunday are now in place. The parade will include some 70 distinct Participating Units, and that Markers will be placed on Street at Marshaling area on 2nd St. to indicate pre-parade alignment. **All Commissioners are encouraged to participate.**

C. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** Re: Non Participation of Commissioner Chris GRUWELL. Sec'y Noetzel read aloud a DRAFT of a letter to be sent to the Mayor and BOS on this issue. The letter requests the dismissal of Comm. Gruwell for non-participation in the business of the VAC, including his absence in 9 of 10 VAC meetings in 2012, to date. Comm. Levin suggests that there is no need to copy the BOS on the letter, as Comm. Gruwell is a Mayoral Appointee. Pres. Ramirez suggests that the letter be modified to concentrate **ONLY** on the poor attendance record, and omit other non-participation references.. Comm. Towers makes **MOTION** that the letter be sent to the mayor, edited to cite only the unacceptable attendance record. (2nd. Comm. Baldonado). The question was called, a vote taken, and the **MOTION PASSED**, unanimously. Sec'y Noetzel will prepare a letter, edited as directed, for signature by President Ramirez.

D. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** on the status of the Veterans Court of San Francisco. Sec'y Noetzel suggests that any documentation moved forward on this issue include the excellent 10-page document published by the SFVAC Medical Center, titled: **WHY CREATE A COURT ESPECIALLY FOR VETERANS**. Pres. Ramirez then suggests that we TABLE this item for the time being, and make it a major advocacy issue for the 2013 term. Item TABLED.

Agenda Item 5 - Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

No new report, other than to confirm that **Ms. Cheryl Cook**, Dir. Of the County Veterans Service office, **has retired**.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

No Report.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Comm. Gibbs reported on a very successful **EAST BAY VETERANS STAND-DOWN event**. Which was held over the 4-day period of September 13-16, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, in Pleasanton, CA. He reported that over 400 Veterans attended, and most received urgently needed on-site services.

Agenda Item 6 - Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Pres. Ramirez announced that **Senator Mark Leno** has introduced **Senate Bill SB1170** which would **prohibit deceptive marketing** by insurance firms who prey on veterans and seniors. Full info available on Senator Leno website.

Agenda Item 7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Pres. Ramirez announced that the ALWMC is running a **White Eagle Sale** on Dec. 1 & 2 from 9am to 5pm. Items for sale include, used office equipment, furniture, etc. **Comm. Levin** announced that Building Secretary Jamie Lopez has now been hired **FULL TIME** to insure prep for Building Closure in spring of 2013, and to facilitate the start of remodel construction on 7/1/12.

Agenda Item 8 - VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

> **Comm. Towers** announced several events of interest to Vets in the near future, including the 16th annual **Profiles of Courage Dinner Produced by SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES**, to honor vets who have successfully completed their programs. He said that he would send out an Email Blast, to provide full details on all of these events.

> **Pres. Ramirez** announced that San Francisco State Univ. is opening a Vet Center in a Grand Opening event tomorrow. Details may be found on the SFSU Website.

Comm. Ray Wong announced that on Veterans Day, numerous bay-area restaurants will offer free meals for veterans. Details available on the VFW website.

> **Comm. Wong** also announced that there will be a re-opening of Mojave Cross ceremony, at the Mojave site.

> **Comm. Caldera** reminded all that there was a Holiday Party at the end of the December VAC meeting last year, and asked if Commissioners were interested in such an event this year, **Pres. Ramirez** asked if anyone was interested they should contact **Comm. Caldera** directly.

Agenda Item 9 - NEW BUSINESS.

- A. **City Policy on Fee Exemption for Veterans Ignored. Potential ACTION ITEM.** Guest: Mr. David Glass addressed the Commission to report on an important topic regarding a new practice by the City Health Department to arbitrarily levee fees...In direct contradiction to the California Code (Sec. 16102) – which provides that **VETERANS** are **EXEMPT** from all **FEES** when selling food-stuffs and other merchandise in California. He stated that his food-vending business has enjoyed this specific benefit for over 2 decades, until a recent change whereby the Health Department has arbitrarily leveed substantial "inspection fees" to his Veteran Owned business.

Comm. Noetzel stated that this is exactly the type of issue that the SFVAC should be effective in resolving, in its Charter Advisory Function.

Comm. Levin makes **MOTION** that VAC write an **Advisory Letter** to the BOS and City Administration, appraising them of the facts in this case, and requesting an answer with respect to this apparent revocation of a specific **Veterans Benefit**. (2nd by **Comm. Noetzel**, as he states that this issue is a litmus test of our ability to get action from the city on a "nuts and bolts" item for the veterans of San Francisco. After some discussion, a **VOTE** was held and the **MOTION** passed unanimously. In further discussion, **Comm. Towers** offered some ideas on how this issue might be researched.

Comm. Levin then offered a **SECOND MOTION**, (2nd, **Comm. Noetzel**) to appoint **Comm. Towers** to be the **LEAD** person to fully research this item, and to Report on It, and **DRAFT** an **Advisory Letter** (on the issue) for presentation at the Dec. VAC meeting. A vote on that Motion passed unanimously and **Comm. Towers** accepted responsibility to present his findings (and a Draft Letter), at the VAC meeting of 12/1/12.

- B. Discussion and **POTENTIAL ACTION** on the status of Veterans Hiring Procedures for the City of San Francisco.

Pres. Ramirez **TABLED** this item in the interests of time. (To be included on future Agenda).

Agenda Item #10 ANNOUNCEMENTS: (See Agenda Item #8, above) No additional announcements.

Agenda Item 11 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item #12 - AJORNMENT

Minutes of the 11/5/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the VAC Meeting of Dec. 3, 2012.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco
War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 104

Monday, December 3, 2012
MEETING AGENDA

President Eduardo "Eddie" Ramirez, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval

a. Review of Sec'y Noetzel's DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 5 November, 2012

Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

1. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to Report, including REVIEW of the time, place, and logistics of the JANUARY meeting of the Commission, in Room 416, City Hall, on Tuesday evening, the 8th of January, 2013 (i.e. 2nd Tues.)

B. Vice President's Report: (none - position vacant)

C. Secretary's Report: Secretary Noetzel to Report, including description of recent/relevant Correspondence and UPDATE on status of appointment of New Commissioners, including introduction of new Commissioners (if any).

2. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2013 Term.

A. Secretary to distribute copies of portions of the ByLaws which pertain to, and describe the Duties and Responsibilities of each of the 3 Officer Positions that constitute the Executive Board.

B. President to open floor for NOMINATIONS, for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, in accordance with ByLaws adopted on 11/5/12. Secretary to Record all Nominations.

3. Committee Reports:

> Chairpersons from other Standing Committees to Report (if any).

4. OLD BUSINESS.

A. City Policy on Fee Exemption for Veterans Ignored. Comm. Towers to report on his research/recommendations on this issue, including **Potential ACTION** on draft letter to City Administration.

B. Update on advocacy for the establishment of a Veterans Court of San Francisco. **Potential ACTION**

5. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Floor opened for Reports/updates by Commissioners.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

c. HOMELESS Veterans.

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area, and REPORT on East Bay Stand-Down event

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Discussion only.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Discussion on latest developments in ongoing struggle to insure appropriate retention of building space and resources after retrofit remodel.

8. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Commissioners to report on activities of various Veterans Organizations.

9. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Distribution of Commission BYLAWS as adopted in November, and discussion of further amendment as recommended by City Attorney. (Lead: Comm. Noetzel, Bylaws Committee Chair).

B. Discussion and development of research plan on the status of Veterans Hiring Procedures for the City of San Francisco.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

12. AJORNMENT

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Pres. Ramirez then opened the floor for Nominations for the Office of Commission VICE PRESIDENT.

Comm. Noetzel nominated Comm. Jordan TOWERS for Vice president. Comm. Towers accepted the nomination.

Comm. Caldera then nominated Comm. Alexandra CRICHLow for Vice president. Comm. Crichlow declined the Nomination.

Comm. Crichlow then nominated Comm. Dottie GUY for Vice president. Comm. Guy accepted the nomination.

With no response to further calls for Nominations to the position, **Pres. Ramirez CLOSED** nominations for Vice President, again adding that another Nominating Period would be available next month, just prior to the VOTING procedure.

Pres. Ramirez then opened the floor for Nominations for the Office of Commission PRESIDENT.

Comm. Towers nominated (current President) Comm. Eduardo RAMIREZ for President. Comm. Ramirez accepted the

Nomination. With no response to further calls for Nominations to the position, **Pres. Ramirez CLOSED nominations for President**, again adding that another Nominating Period would be available next month, just prior to the VOTING procedure.

To Review: The *current* list of accepted nominations for the 2013 term is:

- For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. S. NOETZEL
- For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. D. GUY, and Comm. J. TOWERS
- For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. E. RAMIREZ

3. Committee Reports: Chairpersons from Standing Committees to Report.

Comm. Dottie GUY reported (as Chair) of the COMMITTEE on WOMEN'S ISSUES Within the Veterans and Military Community. She announced that the Committee held its initial meeting just prior to the VAC meeting, and that they established that their initial priority issues would be Women's Health care and Sexual Trauma in the military. Additional issues would include Homeless Female veterans, and the high rate of unemployment for female veterans. Comm. Guy announced that the Committee plans to meet again in February.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. City Policy on Fee Exemption for Veterans Ignored.

Lead Commissioner (on this issue), **Comm. Towers** reported on his research on this issue. He stated that he went directly to the S.F. Dept. of Public Health, to bring to them the issue as explained by (Veteran) Dave Glass, at the November meeting. From there, he was encouraged to seek an opinion (on the issue), from the office of the City Attorney. In due time the City Attorney ruled in complete agreement with Mr. Glass; specifically, that there was no requirement that a veteran must be 'on-site' to retain Fee Exempt Status – so long as the vendor items being sold were the property of the vendor.

President Ramirez reported that he received an Email from the Director of the Health Department, advising him of the favorable ruling to veterans in general and to Mr. Glass in particular, and that Veterans vending food and merchandise may continue to do so on a Fee Exempt basis in accordance with California law.

Comm. Noetzel complemented Comm. Towers for an excellent job in following up on this issue as assigned, and noted that this represents a **tangible victory for city Veterans.**

B. Update on advocacy for the establishment of a Veterans Court of San Francisco. Potential ACTION

President Ramirez TABLED this issue, in favor of taking it up again in the new year, when new Commissioner **Michael MAFFEI** will be able to take the lead on this as he is an Assistant D.A. with SF District Attorney (and veteran) George Gascon.

5. Current VETERANS PROJECTS & REPORTS ON ONGOING ISSUES

a. Veterans EMPLOYMENT.

Pres. Ramirez announced that he has an opening for a Clerk (GS5) position at the VA Med Ctr. @ Ft. Miley.

b. Veterans HEALTH AND WELFARE.

No new discussion/developments in this area.

c. **HOMELESS Veterans.**

Comm. Gibbs reported on incoming donations of clothing and bedding. **Pres. Ramirez** offered to utilize his truck for redistribution of such donations to organizations where they can be put to use to help Homeless Vets.

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Comm. R. Wong mentioned that earlier in the day he sent (to Commissioners) an Email, which reviewed some **key Veterans Legislation supported by the VFW in 2012**. They included 4 Calif. Bills; 3 of which were signed into law and one Vetoted by the Governor. Comm. Levin suggested that the items be placed on the **Agenda of the next meeting** for Advice Letter recommendations.

Agenda Item 7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Comm. Levin announced that the American Legion War Memorial Commission will meet at 6pm on Tuesday, the 4th of December, in Room 104, to discuss (among other items), the latest developments in ongoing struggle to insure appropriate retention of building space and resources (in the Veterans Building) after retrofit remodel.

Agenda Item 8. VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVITIES

Comm. Towers announced that SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES has recently opened its new facility at 150 Otis St. (S.F.), thereby providing a brand new home for some 75 formerly homeless veterans. The official Grand-Opening ceremony is scheduled for January 30, at the facility.

Agenda Item 9. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Distribution of Commission BYLAWS

Sec'y Noetzel distributed copies of an FINAL DRAFT of the new Commission Bylaws for review and comment (over the next month), by all Commissioners. This new document includes all format and substance corrections/recommendations made by City Attorney Snodgrass after review of our recently revised (and adopted) Bylaws. The Final Version of the Commission Bylaws will be considered for Ratification as an Action Item on the SFVAC Agenda for the next meeting.

B. Veterans Hiring Procedures for the City of San Francisco. President Ramirez TABLED this issue, in favor of taking it up again in the New Year, when new Committee assignments are made.

Agenda Item 10. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Comm. GUY announced that she can acquire tickets to the Dec. 29th Kraft HUNGER BOWL football game at AT&T Park, S.F. (Navy vs. Arizona State).
- Comm. R. Wong announced that the annual Wreaths Across America event at the Presidio will be on the 15th of December, starting at 8:30am. Contact him for additional info
- Comm. Caldera announced that A.L. Post 315 will host its annual Holiday Party, on the 8th of December, in the Veterans Building. He distributed flyers for the event.
- Pres. Ramirez announced that on the 18th of December the S.F. Police department will host a Bicycle Give-Away event for needy persons in San Francisco. If anyone knows of a homeless or needy Veteran, they should contact him.

Agenda Item 11. Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the Veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item 12. AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:29pm

Minutes of the 12/3/12 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the SFVAC Meeting of 1/8/13.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, January 8, 2013
MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA
President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

a. Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 3 December 2012

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to present final President's Report for 2012 Term, including introduction of three (3) newly appointed members of the Commission, namely:

Commissioner Lee BURNETTE, appointed to BOS Seat #2, formerly held by Comm. Anthony ALFIDI

Commissioner John GALLAGER, appointed to BOS to Seat #6, (formerly Comm. George GIBBS)

Commissioner Michael MAFFEI, appointed to BOS on 12/4/12 in Seat #6, (formerly Comm. Dara WONG)

Note: Above Commissioners were appointed by BOS on 12/4/12, and appointment term runs through 1/31/16.

B. Secretary's Report;

> **ACTION ITEM:** Secretary Noetzel to present NEW BYLAWS for Ratification.

> **ACTION ITEM:** Secretary Noetzel to present DRAFT of ANNUAL REPORT of 2012 (as required in By- Laws). Discussion and potential Motion for Adoption and Ratification.

> Correspondence & contacts since precious meeting.

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3. NEW Business – Final NOMINATIONS and ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2013 TERM.

A. President Ramirez to open floor for any potential additional Nominations for Office (including Self-Nomination).

B. President Ramirez to afford equal floor time for Nominated Candidates to announce their 'Platform', or Administrative Plans, Goals, and Vision for the VAC, if elected.

C. President Ramirez to administer Election of Officers by *Public Written Ballot*. Commission Secretary will display a large format 'tally sheet' to display election results.

D. President Ramirez to Preside over formal Installation of New Officers, for the 2013 Term, after which the balance of the meeting will be turned over to the new PRESIDENT/Chair.

From this point forward; Newly Elected President, Presiding

4. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

President to preside over Open Discussion Goals and Plans for the Commission for the 2013 term. Commissioners are urged to present their individual ideas and views in this area for future consideration/implementation. **PRESIDENT** may take this opportunity to Appoint standing COMMITTEES on various issues. **Potential ACTION ITEM.**

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

Comm. Noetzel to report on research on proposed Federal FACT Acts, Re: Asbestos Claims.

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Review of list of Veterans Related Bills considered by Calif. State Legislature In 2012. Consideration of potential development of correspondence to express views of VAC. **Potential ACTION ITEM.**

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Brief reports from Liaison Commissioners on any significant developments in this area.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events/activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in ALL wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and recent suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. ADJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Jan. 8, 2013

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum, the First Ever City Hall Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by **President Eddie Ramirez** at 6:08pm, starting with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, **Baldonado, Burnette, Caldera, Crichlow, Dacumos, Gallagher, Guy, Levin, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong.** (15)

Absent: None (100% attendance!) Note: Commission strength on this date still at 15 active members, 2 vacancies.

Attending Guests: M. Latonia Dixon; Mr. Bruce Smith, and former Commissioner Dara Wong (Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was also in attendance.)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Caldera (2nd, Comm. Guy)** Without further discussion, meeting **Agenda** was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of November 5, 2012 (as written by Secretary s. Noetzel) made by Comm. Towers (2nd Comm. Guy). Without further discussion, Minutes for the 11/5/12, VAC meeting passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

- A **Guest Latonia Dixon (a Veteran)**, introduced herself and distributed Flyers for a 2/10/13 Black History Month Celebration to specifically honor the contributions of African American Veterans. The daylong event will be in Room 223 of the WMVB and will feature the screening of the film "Red Tails" as well as forums, honored guests, and a dinner.

Agenda Item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report: President Ramirez began with the introduction of three (3) newly appointed members of the Commission, and asked each of them for a short dissertation on their background:

- > **Commissioner Lee BURNETTE**, (now appointed to VAC BOS Seat #2 replacing Comm. Alfidi), said that he had served 5 years in the US Navy (2005-'10). He worked as a **Communications Electrician and Search/Rescue swimmer**. On discharge from active duty he took full advantage of education benefits attending **City College** and serving as **Treasurer of the Veterans Alliance** group there. He is also working as a staff member in the office of Board of Supervisor President David Chiu.

- > **Commissioner John GALLAGER**, (now appointed to VAC BOS to Seat #6 replacing Comm. Gibbs) stated that he had served in the US Marine Corps, as a Mortar man and was discharged in 1999. He has worked in advocacy for veterans in several capacities since then and is **currently a VA Veterans Claims Representative** working full time to serve veterans at the **County Veterans Service Office**.

- > Commissioner Michael MAFFEI, (now appointed to VAC BOS Seat #6, replacing Comm. Dara Wong) stated that he also served in the US Navy working as an attorney in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, with active duty from March 2006 to August 2010. At the Ventura County Naval Base he served as a defense attorney and was then deployed to Baghdad Iraq from Dec. '06 to June '07, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was then transferred to Washington, DC, and served as a law clerk to a judge on the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals, and then the Appellate Defense Division. Following his release from active duty Mike affiliated with the U.S. Navy Reserves, and was selected for promotion to Lieutenant Commander (E-4) in August, 2012. Comm. Maffei now works for the City of San Francisco as a trial attorney. He also announced that he plans to be married in the spring, *however he will likely be recalled to Active Duty for a 9-month assignment, in the summer.*

After their introductions, all three new members were welcomed with a warm round of congratulatory applause.

B. Secretary's Report.

Secretary Noetzel began with an **Agenda Action Item**; namely consideration of the latest version of the SFVAC BYLAWS for adoption and ratification. He made reference to the last document that he had distributed at the previous meeting, (i.e. the UPDATED version of the newly revised and ratified BYLAWS of the SFVAC), noting that the subject version included no actual content revision; merely changes in format as recommended by the office of the City Attorney. Having had adequate opportunity to review the document, **Comm. Levin** made a MOTION to adopt the updated BYLAWS, as written (2nd by **Comm. Weebly**). In discussion, **Comm. Levin** reminded all that further changes to the Bylaws may be made at any time that the Commission sees fit, and suggested that we move forward with the updated version as presented. **Pres. Ramirez** called the question and a vote was taken. **The revised Bylaws of 5 November, 2012 were adopted and ratified, by unanimous vote, and will subsequently be posted to the Commission Website.**

Secretary's Report (continued)

Secretary Noetzel followed with a second **Agenda Action Item**: namely consideration of the earlier distributed **DRAFT of the SFVAC 2012 ANNUAL REPORT**. Once again, Comm. Levin offered a MOTION to adopt the REPORT as written (2nd. Comm. Wilkerson). In subsequent discussion, Comm. Caldera stated that significant work had been accomplished, by several members of the Commission, to facilitate the transition (for VAC Meetings) to our new 'home' in City Hall, in advance of the pending 2-year closure of the War Memorial Veterans Building. He stated that such efforts might be included in the report. Comm. Levin pointed out that the actual transition (to City Hall) was made at the start of 2013. He added his hope that the successful move, and all efforts to facilitate that move, might be more appropriately reflected in the Annual Report for the current year (2013). After additional miscellaneous discussion, **Pres. Ramirez** mandated that **efforts to effect the successful move be appropriately indicated within the 2013 Annual Report**. He then called the question and a vote was taken. **The 2012 SFVAC ANNUAL REPORT was adopted** (with only one minor spelling correction) and **ratified, by unanimous vote, and will subsequently be forwarded to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, as per Charter requirement.**

Secretary Noetzel closed his report with a short update on the status of Commissioner Chris Gruwell. In recent correspondence with Ms. Wheaton of the Mayor's office it was confirmed that **Mr. Gruwell has indeed resigned from the Commission** due to personal issues. It was further established that the Mayor's office is still seeking a formal Resignation document, but all are in agreement that the position is effectively vacant, and will be indicated as such on all current Commission Rosters. **Sec'y Noetzel confirmed that he has updated all Commission Rosters to indicate TWO vacancies; those being:**

1. The opened (Mayoral appointed) seat due to the resignation of Comm. Gruwell, and,
2. The opened (BOS appointed) Seat #2, due to the resignation of Commissioner Thompson.

Updated Confidential Commission **ROSTERS** were then distributed to all Commission members. Comm. Towers asked if Rosters could also be sent to Commissioners via Email. After some discussion it was agreed that Electronic distribution of the Roster would be the preferred method for transmitting updates. [End of Secretaries Report.](#)

Agenda Item 3 - NEW Business: Final NOMINATIONS and ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2013 TERM.

President Ramirez reviewed the current status of nominations (as posted on a large format summary board in full view of all Commissioners, to wit:

For Commission PRESIDENT:
Commissioner Eduardo Ramirez

For Commission VICE-PRESIDENT:
Commissioner Dottie Guy
Commissioner Jordan Towers

For Commission SECRETARY:
Commissioner Stephen Noetzel

ELECTION PROCEEDINGS FOR THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY.

President Ramirez then opened the floor for ADDITIONAL NOMINATIONS for the position of SECRETARY. Commissioner Towers responded by nominating Commissioner Lee Burnett. Mr. Burnette accepted the nomination and his name was added to the summary board. Hearing no additional nominations for the position of Secretary, President Ramirez then moved the process by affording opportunity for both candidates for Secretary to announce their qualification and interest in serving as Commission Secretary.

Comm. Burnette led off by stating that he is motivated to become an asset to the Commission by use of his experience in working with fellow student-veterans at City College, where veteran enrollment has increased from 400, to over 1500 in recent months. In addition to his leadership role in the City College Veterans Alliance, he is now working as a aide in the office of BOS President David Chiu. He feels that this background and his interest in the work of the commission make him a good choice for the position of Secretary.

In his statement, **Comm. Noetzel** said that he is satisfied to stand on his record and body of work as Commission Secretary for the past 2 years. He stated that he was indeed ready to pass on the work of Commission Secretary to a new volunteer and hoped to work with Comm. Burnette and others so that they can gain experience needed to execute this complex job.

President Ramirez then moved forward to administer a **PUBLIC BALLOT VOTE (as required by law)** for the office of **SECRETARY**. City Attorney Snodgrass and guest Dara Wong were asked to **assist in tabulation and verification of the marked ballots**. After tabulating the marked ballots, Mr. Snodgrass announced the results:

> **Commissioner NOETZEL** received a total of **ELEVEN VOTES (11)**,
(Baldonado, Crichlow, Dacumos, Guy, Levin, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong).

> Commissioner BURNETTE received a total of FOUR VOTES (4), (Burnette, Caldera, Gallagher, Towers).

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Agenda Item 9 – (Honors Report)

At the suggestion of Comm. Levin, and after considerable discussion within the Commission, the text of the traditional Honors Report made prior to our Moment of Silence, was revised/expanded this month (added text in RED) as follows:

Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans *and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests* and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

In addition to these, for this particular Report, we honor the memory of three specific US Service Veterans who have recently passed; those being:

- > Senator Daniel Inouye, a WWII Medal of Honor winner and senior US Senator from Hawaii (who passed on 12/17/12).
- > Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf who commanded Coalition Forces in the Persian Gulf War (who passed on 12/27/12).
- > Mr. Walter Newman a veteran of US Military service who was instrumental in establishing the City College Veterans Alliance (who also passed in December.)

10. AJORNMENT. Meeting Adjourned at 7:40pm

Minutes of the 1/8/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the SFVAC Meeting of 2/12/13.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of **January 8, 2013** Page 5 of 5

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- > **Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf** who commanded Coalition Forces in the Persian Gulf War (who passed on 12/27/12).
- > **Mr. Walter Newman** a veteran of US Military service who was instrumental in establishing the City College Veterans Alliance (who also passed in December.)

10. **AJORNMENT.** Meeting Adjourned at 7:40pm

Minutes of the 1/8/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the SFVAC Meeting of 2/12/13.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

a. Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 8 January, 2013

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report, including (but not limited to):

> Call for volunteers to serve as Liaison (i.e. "Lead") or Committee members on various issues.

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

> Discussion on potential utilization of Social Media Accounts for SFVAC

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report, including (but not limited to):

> Correspondence & contacts since precious meeting.

> March 4, 2013 meeting of Secretaries of all City Commissions/Boards.

3. NEW Business -

A. Potential Action Item with regard to formal request for City Code Change(s) on 3 distinct issues:

1. The Appointment Date PILE-UP.

2. DIVERSITY MANDATES for Individual Seats.

3. Commission OVERSIZE.

B. Security Ilhting at Ft. Miley bus-stop (Lead, Comm. Guy)

4. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Further discussion of **potential VAC GOALS and PLANS** for 2013.

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Review, Discussion and **Potential Action** to approve **letter of appreciation** regarding 3 new recently passed State Laws of significant benefit to VETERANS.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Brief reports regarding developments in this area.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

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Agenda Item #7 - WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Comm. Caldera reported on what he felt were some irregularities at the 1/10/13 meeting of the Board of Trust of the War Memorial Buildings Complex. After checking with City Attorney Snodgrass his objections were dropped.

Comm. Levin then reported that previous to the full BOT meeting, there was a meeting of the Veterans Building Project Committee, and at that meeting there was broad discussion concerning potential for revenue production via the potential sale of NAMING RIGHTS for all several distinct area of the War Memorial Veterans Building. The Committee voted to forward a RESOLUTION to the full Board of Trust, suggesting a specific list of 'Naming Opportunities', including the main Entry Door at McAllister Street.

Comm. Levin said he has met with Board of Trust President Gen. Myatt to object to renaming any portion of the building without full opportunity for Veterans to learn all aspects of the "naming suggestions", as well as opportunity to speak out prior to any such process. He said that Gen. Myatt was in full agreement and would insure a full and opened process with regard to the naming of any portion of the building. President Ramirez stated that he will reach out to Gen. Myatt for discussions on how the SFVAC might be of assistance in retaining an appropriate level of VETERANS influence in the building.

Comm. Levin added comments and information regarding Building Closure, reminding all that April 30, 2013 will be the final date that the building will be available for events, meetings or gatherings.

Comm. Levin further announced that the Board of Trustees have authorized lease of alternate Office Space for use by American Legion Posts and District 8 Headquarters. Thus the new Interim Location of the ALWMC and American Legion for the foreseeable future will be at: 205 13th Street, suite 3300
He announced that space on 3rd floor available each weekday until 7pm, plus two Saturday's per month if needed for planned events. The leased space includes temporary office facilities, plus a cafeteria area that can double as a conference room. Finally, he announced that use of the new facility will be made available to all Veterans related organizations, by application to the American Legion War Memorial Commission, on a 'space available' basis.

Agenda Item #8 - ANNOUNCEMENTS:

> Comm. Caldera announced that the 2/10 'Sankofa Sunday' event at the Veterans building was a huge success, and thanked all who helped in organization and participation. The event was sponsored by AL Post 315 and the SF Chapter of Veterans for Peace. Pres. Ramirez added his complements for a great event, adding that he was proud to be associated with veterans who still organize and run successful and worthwhile events that benefit the Veterans community of the city.

> Comm. Wong announced that the annual VFW sponsored STATE WIDE High School Speech Contest was won by Damale Hayes of Mercy High School. Ms. Hayes spoke on the subject: "Is the Constitution Relevant?". She will be representing the State of California in competition for the National Award. There will be an event on the 22nd of February, at Mercy High School, to honor this talented student. See Comm. Wong will send out an Email announcement with event details.

> Comm. Guy announced several events for area veterans, including:
 > Dragon boat racing at Lake Merritt, and
 > A demonstration event on how to produce drinking cups from recycled paper, and
 > A "Sister Soljah" event @ UCSF on the 22nd of February.

Comm. Guy will work with Social Media Coordinator Comm. Towers to publicize these events, and provide full details.

> Pres. Ramirez announced that the next Veterans Town Hall Collaborative meetings will be on Wednesday, the 27th of February 2013, in the War Memorial Veterans Building.

> Comm. Dacumos announced that the International Military Pilgrimage of Wounded Warriors will take place on the 19th of May, 2013. More details on this in future meetings.

> Comm. Towers announced that Gov. Brown recently appointed a new Deputy Sec'y for Veterans Affairs for the State of California Department of Veterans Affairs. He is a Swords to Plowshares staffer, Mr. Keith Boylan.

Agenda Item #9 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

Comm. Caldera requested that in this months Moment of Silence Commemoration, we also include specific honors to the many African American veterans who have died in service to nation. Thus included, our February Moment of Silence, "In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community" concluded the meeting.

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Minutes of the 2/12/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and after discussion and minor correction, APPROVED at the SFVAC general meeting of 3/12/13

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)

REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)

REVIEW of earlier Meeting MINUTES for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

a. Review of DRAFT MINUTES for the VAC Meeting of 12 February, 2013

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report, including (but not limited to):

> Call for volunteers to serve as Liaison (i.e. "Lead") or Committee members on various issues.

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

> Progress Report on utilization of Social Media Accounts for SFVAC.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report, including (but not limited to):

> Correspondence & contacts since previous meeting, including letter of appreciation to Gov. & State

Legislators on 2012 laws passed that benefit Veterans and Veterans Community.

> Report on March 11, 2013 meeting of Secretaries of City Commissions/Boards.

3. NEW Business -

A. Report and Discussion on progress in establishment of New Mailing Address for SFVAC (Lead, Comm. Burnette)
Potential Action Item.

B. Report and Discussion on VAC Business Card Format. What info should be included, and what OPTION CHOICES should be available? **Potential Action Item.**

C. General Discussion on potential for expanding audio recording of VAC meetings to include Cable TV in City Network.
Potential Action Item

D. Discussion on City of S.F. "311" System: What would SFVAC like to see included on 311 Website. **Potential Action Item**

E. Discussion and **Potential Action** in support of the Jan Karski exhibit in City Hall as part of Holocaust Remembrance Month.

4. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Opportunity for discussion and introduction of NEW Goals/plans for SFVAC for 2013, if any.

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing Issues)

A. Report on progress of development of a VETERANS COURT for San Francisco. (Lead, Pres. Ramirez, and Comm. Maffei.). **Potential Action Item.**

B. Report on progress of Security Lighting at Ft. Miley bus-stop (Lead, Comm. Guy, Pres Ramirez)

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Discussion on Local, State Federal Vet Related legislation pending and/or passed.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Lead, Comm. Caldera)

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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For information on your rights under the Sunshine ordinance (Chapter 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code), or to report a violation of the ordinance, please contact: Mr. Chris RUSTON, Administrator, Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, at telephone # 415-554-7724.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

DISABILITY ACCESS

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Note to Commissioners: If you know beforehand that you will NOT be able to attend the meeting for this AGENDA, please advise Commission Secretary S. Noetzel via Telephone (415.378.8214) or Email: noetzel@pacbell.net

- [illegible]

Agenda Item #8 - ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Pres. Ramirez** announced that the next **Veterans Town Hall Collaborative** meetings will be on **Wednesday, the 27th of February 2013, in the War Memorial Veterans Building.**
- He also announced that the **APRIL Town Hall Collaborative** meetings (and University Summit) will be on **Wednesday, the 24th of April 2013.** (See Info on VAC Website FaceBook page).
- **Comm. Guy** announced that on **Friday the 19th of April, 2013,** in room 207 of the War Memorial Veterans Building, in collaboration with the ALWMC, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER and Congresswoman BARBARA LEE will host the **Second Annual VETERANS FIX-IT EVENT.** For full information and registration details, see **EVENT FLYER** on the FaceBook Page of the SFVAC Website.
- **Comm. Weeby** announced that she is also going to Washington D.C. (in APRIL) to participate in lobbying efforts to pass legislation designed to fight **Sexual Trauma within the military.**
- **Comm. Guy** announced that she is going to Washington D.C. to participate in the **IAVA event called: Storm the Hill in DC** next week. She will be working with numbers of "Post – 911" vets who will lobby federal government for **action to reduce the horrendous VA backlog, and other Veterans related issues.**
- **Comm. Dacumos** announced that the **International Military Pilgrimage of Wounded Warriors** will take place on the 19th of May, 2013. More details on this in future meetings.
- **Comm. R. Wong** announced that the California winner of the national VFW sponsored **High School Speech Contest, Ms. Danielle Hayes, of Mercy High School in San Francisco,** has recently gone on to **WIN the NATIONAL CONTEST!** Congratulations to Danielle on her Essay: "Is the Constitution Still Relevant?". Essay can be viewed on VFW website.

Agenda Item #9 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community" concluded the meeting.

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 8:09pm

*Minutes of the 3/12/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and
APPROVED (as submitted) at the SFVAC Meeting of 4/9/13.*

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, April 9, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of 12 February, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report.

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Progress Report on update of Social Media pages on SFVAC Website.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business

A. Potential Action Item: Discussion and potential endorsement of 5/25/13 event at the Marines Memorial building to honor the San Francisco State University Veterans Graduation. (Pres. Ramirez, Lead)

4. Commission GOALS AND PLANS

Review and discussion of NEW PROGRESS on announced Goals/plans for SFVAC for 2013,

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

A. Report and Discussion on progress on acquisition of new BUSINESS CARDS for SFVAC (Comm. Burnette, Lead)

B. Report on progress of the new VETERANS COURT for San Francisco. (Comm. Maffel, Lead)

C. Report on progress of Security lighting at Ft. Miley bus-stop (Comm. Guy, Lead)

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION. Discussion on Local, State Federal Vet Related legislation pending and/or passed.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

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Agenda Item 7 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Comm. Caldera reported on recent developments. He distributed copies of a 7-page document that included the **AGENDA for the War Memorial Board of Trustees meeting of 3/14/13**, which provided extensive detail on elements of the remodel plans for the War Memorial Veterans Building. Another document was the **AGENDA for the 4/11/13 meeting of the BOT**. He pointed out that it includes a Closed Session wherein the BOT will discuss the lawsuit filed against them by the City of S.F. Law Library.

Agenda Item 8 – Announcements

*Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the **VAC Facebook page**. Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>*

- Comm. Burnette announced that on Thurs. 4/11/13 there is a seminar in the Veterans Success Center on Jobs for Veterans.
- Comm. Caldera announced that on 4/23/13, Veterans for Peace is hosting a 'Farewell for Now' Pot-Luck party in room 223 of the WMB, starting at 7pm. All are invited
- Comm. Guy announced that on Friday the 19th of April, 2013, in room 207 of the War Memorial Veterans Building, in collaboration with the ALWMC, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER and Congresswoman BARBARA LEE will host the Second Annual VETERANS FIX-IT EVENT. For full information and registration details, see EVENT FLYER on the FaceBook Page of the SFVAC Website.
- Comm. Guy announced that on 4/23/13 there is a seminar in the WMB on Women in Combat.
- President Ramirez announced that the APRIL Town Hall Collaborative meetings (and University Summit) will be on Wednesday, the 24th of April 2013. (See info on VAC Website FaceBook page).
- Comm. Dacumos announced that on 5/6/13, she and other volunteer vets will be once again visiting the 'Veterans pod' – a group of approx. 30 veterans incarcerated at the San Bruno jail. They will be providing information on services available, including advice on use of the new San Francisco Veterans Court.
- Comm. Levin announced the 145th Presidio Memorial Day Ceremony to commemorate the loss of service men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation will take place on Monday the 27th of May, 2013, with proceedings starting at 10:30am. See VAC Website (cited above) for further info.
- Comm. Burnette announced that the BAY AREA ASSOC OF DISABLED SAILORS invites participants to join them on Sundays at Pier 40, at 10am, for sailing expeditions.

Agenda Item #9 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community. Also included for this meeting: Memorial remembrance of US Navy Commander Robert E. Landau, friend and supporter of the Veterans Community in San Francisco, who passed on 2/26 at age 92.

The Moment of Silence concluded the meeting.

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 8:29pm

Minutes of the 4/9/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel and APPROVED (as submitted) at the SFVAC Meeting of 5/14/13.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, May 14, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of April 9, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Ramirez to report.

B. Vice Presidents Report: V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Progress Report on update of Social Media pages on SFVAC Website.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business

- A. Presentation, discussion and **potential action** on potential VAC Endorsement of the COMING HOME PROJECT, as introduced by invited Commission guest Dr. Joe Bobrow.
- B. Discussion and **potential action** on the subject of City of S.F. policy on "Buy Back" of Active Duty Service Time, to add to Retirement credit for City Employees. (Comm. Traml to present).
- C. Comm. Towers and Comm. Weeby to report on Joint efforts to research definitions and implications of Commission "Support" and "Endorsements"

4. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing Issues)

- A. Report and Discussion on progress on acquisition of new BUSINESS CARDS for SFVAC (Comm. Burnette, Lead)
- B. Report on proceedings of the new VETERANS COURT for San Francisco. (Comm. Maffel, Lead)
- C. Report on issues of needed improvements at Ft. Miley:
 - > Progress of Security Lighting at Ft. Miley bus-stop (Comm. Guy, Lead)
 - > Improvement of directional STREET SIGNAGE (Comm. Wilkerson, Lead)

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on first Legislation Committee Meeting.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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C. Secretary's Report;

Secretary Noetzel reported on recent Commission Correspondence including:

- A 5/14 Email from Dr. Emily Morass, Executive Director of the San Francisco Department of the Status of Women (a City Agency). The Email extends an invitation to the SFVAC to participate in a meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, in City Hall, room 408 starting at 5pm on Wed. the 22nd of May. After some discussion, **President Ramirez** directed the Chair of the Committee on Female Veterans Issues, **Comm. Dottie Guy**, to follow up on this invitation, and insure our participation.
- Also, **Comm. Dacumos** forwarded a copy of a 4/1 letter from BEVAN DUFFY, Director of San Francisco's PROJECT HOPE (Housing, Opportunity, Partnership and Engagement) to the **S.F. Interfaith Council**. In it, Dir. Duffy introduces a Training Program called "Responding to the Homeless on our Doorsteps", to be held at St. Mary's Cathedral, in the 16th of May, from 10am to 11:30am. Copies of the letter were distributed to interested Commission members.

Agenda Item 3. - NEW Business

A. COMING HOME PROJECT.

Commission guest **Dr. Joe Bobrow** made a presentation, and a request for discussion and **potential VAC Endorsement of the COMING HOME PROJECT** (as an Agenda 'potential Action' item. Specifically, he requests the SFVAC to advocate with the leadership of the San Francisco Department of Recreation & Parks, (for them) to **DONATE** the Camp Mather facility for a weekend **RETREAT** for returning military personnel during this summer. He reminded the Commission that his Project is a Non-profit, all volunteer effort to alleviate the 'unseen injuries' of returning vets. He reported that he has already gone through all proper channels to request such a donation of the park, with no success whatsoever. Similarly, when **Comm. Burnette** was assigned the task of researching best ways to succeed with this request, there was no follow-through. After some discussion, **Comm. Maffei** made a **Motion** that he draft a letter (for signature by Pres. Ramirez) to ask the Director of SF Rec/Park to intervene in this matter and approve the cost-free retreat as a benefit to our returning military personnel. (2nd by Comm. Noetzel). After some discussion, a **vote was held and it passed unanimously**. The letter will be written by **Comm. Maffei**.

B. City Policy on Inclusion of Active Duty Service Time (for Retirement Credit).

Comm. Tramill reported on her investigation into questions she was asked to research in the previous VAC meeting. Specifically, she was told that current City Policy provides Military Service time to be added to City Employee Service time ONLY in instances where the employee is called to Active Duty AFTER already established employment with the City.

Furthermore, when she inquired as to HOW MANY City Employee Veterans fell into this category, or for that matter, how many of the city employees actually held status as Veterans. She was told that there were no statistics kept on the former question, and that the answer to the second question was confidential in nature.

Comm. Towers then suggested that the answers to these questions might be produced (by appropriate City Administrators) *if the request was formally made by this Commission.*

President Ramirez suggested that some of the collected CENSUS DATA might be of help here. After some discussion, the matter was TABLED for further research by Interested Commissioners.

C. Definitions and Implications of Commission “Endorsement”, and “Support”

Comm. Weeby reported that she and Comm. Towers had met, researched, and discussed these terms as tasked by the President. She reported that she and Comm. Towers are working on authoring new TEXT, (to be added to the VAC website) that describes exactly what is meant by a formal ("voted on") Endorsement by the Commission. The intent is to define formal VAC Endorsement (for an issue or an event) as something that the Commission has considered in full, and VOTED in favor of the subject Event, Issue, or subject, and that Formal Commission Endorsement may or may not include issue of a letter or document (from the Commission) to amplify on said Endorsement. President Ramirez then added comments regarding the term "SUPPORTED" by the Commission (as distinguished from Endorsement). He asked that this term should be included in the Website Statement, as a degree of support that is a general consensus of the Commission, but has not been voted on at the formal Endorsement level. He asked that Commissioners Weeby and Towers report on this issue again, when they have completed the Website Addition Text.

Agenda Item 4 – Old Business

A. BUSINESS CARDS for SFVAC. Comm. Burnette, Lead, was absent and has been out of communication for some weeks now. Sec'y Noetzel reported that he received a call from Lynn Khaw, Executive Assistant to the City Administrator. She said that the card order was delayed as she was unable to reach Commissioner Burnette to proof-read the cards prior to printing. Noetzel made a trip to her office and accomplished the proof-reading task, correcting all imperfections. The card order is now at the printer, with expedited service.

Agenda Item 4 – Old Business (CONTINUED)

- B. San Francisco VETERANS COURT.** Comm. Maffei, provided a full report on the growing success of the new City Veterans Court, now in session every Wednesday at 2pm. The court takes on cases regarding offenses by defendants who have verified VETERAN status, including thefts, misdemeanors, etc. It continues to pick up interest and an increase in cases every month, now in excess of 20 per week. Comm. Maffei explained that even though it is at present limited to crime committed in specific High-crime areas and does not yet include felony cases, the long established Veterans Court of Santa Clara provides a good model for the new court to follow. Court referrals for its veteran defendants includes counseling and many other social services, as explained on the promotional flyers he distributed.
- C. Needed Lighting Improvements at Ft. Miley.** Lead Commissioner Guy reported that she has not been able to return to the facility after dark, to re-examine the current lighting deficiencies. President Ramirez said that there is a new Facility Maintenance Chief, now on duty at Ft. Miley. He will provide contact information for Comm. Guy to follow up with in the future. The issue of improved SIGNAGE to direct people to the VA Medical center, was briefly discussed. **These issues were then TABLED for a re-visit at a future meeting, and/or work by individual Commissioners.**

Agenda Item 5 – Veterans related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY reported on the first formal meeting of the VAC Veterans Issue Legislation Committee. On Monday evening, the 6th of May, Comm. Weeby, as Chair, led a duly posted Public Meeting met at Peets Café, at 601 Van Ness. Attendees included Commissioners Towers, Noetzel, and Maffei. Comm. Weeby reported that the basis of the potential Legislation issues were extracted from a marvelous new 58-page publication produced by IAVA (Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans of America), titled “3013 Policy Agenda (for the) New ‘Greatest Generation’”. The document sets forth legislative and other Action Plans in eight distinct areas. The Committee selected the EMPLOYMENT issue as a primary one to work on, including seven (7) separate areas that need attention and support from the SFVAC. **Commissioner Weeby and other Committee members will report at future VAC meetings.**

Commissioner Raymond Wong also reported on Calif Senate Bill SB725 which addresses Preservation of Veterans Continuing use of building facilities when public Veterans Buildings and facilities are shut down for building remodel/retrofit. The bill would securely protect such veteran's rights. **He urged that the VAC support this important legislation.**

Agenda Item 6 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Comm. Caldera reported on recent developments, including a 4/11/13 S.F. War Memorial Board of Trustees CLOSED SESSION meeting. He distributed copies of the Agenda for that meeting, and stated that he and several interested parties, including ALWMC Chair Nelson Lum requested a report on Closed Session proceedings. With minimal discussion, the BOT voted NOT to disclose any information from Closed Session.

Agenda Item 7 – Announcements

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page. Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

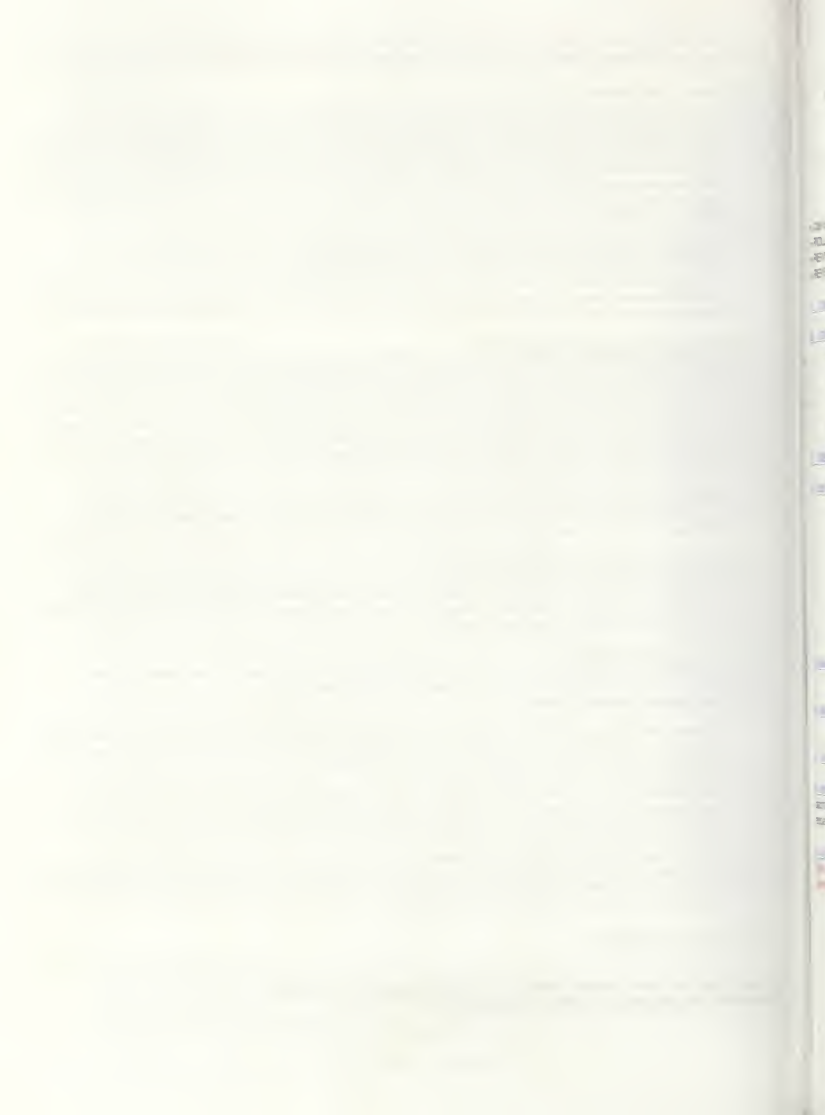
- Comm. Levin announced the 145th Presidio Memorial Day Ceremony to commemorate the loss of service men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation will take place on Monday the 27th of May, 2013, with proceedings starting at 10:30am. See VAC Website (cited above) for further info.
- Pres. Ramirez announced that his series of monthly Town Hall Collaborative Meetings will CONTINUE at a new location, after closure of the War Memorial Veterans Building. Meetings will be held on the 4th Wednesday of every month, from 9am -11am, and 3pm - 5pm, at the Phillip Burton Federal Building, at 450 Golden Gate Ave, 2nd fl.

Agenda Item #8 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community. The Moment of Silence concluded the meeting.

Agenda Item #9 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 723pm



VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, June 11, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for *VAC Meeting of April 9, 2013* for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report.

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

> Progress Report on update of Social Media pages on SFVAC Website.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business (None Scheduled)

4. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing Issues)

- A. Discussion and **potential action** on the subject of City of S.F. policy on "Buy Back" of Active Duty Service Time, to add to Retirement credit for City Employees. (Comm. Tramil to present).
- B. Report on proceedings of the new **VETERANS COURT** for San Francisco. (Comm. Maffei, Lead)
- C. Report on issues of needed improvements at Ft. Miley:
 - > Progress of **Security lighting** at Ft. Miley bus-stop (Comm. Guy, Lead)
 - > Improvement of directional **STREET SIGNAGE** (Comm. Wilkerson, Lead)

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on further developments within the **Legislation Committee.**

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@pacbell.net or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

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Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: June 11, 2013

Call to Order

Having achieved a bare-minimum Quorum at 6:15pm (see Roll Call, below), the June Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by **President Eduardo Ramirez** at 6:15pm. Meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, **Burnette, Caldera, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wong (9)**
Absent and excused by President: Commissioners Baldonado (illness), Dacumos (illness), Levin, (Personal leave)

Absent – UN-EXCUSED: Commissioners Crichlow, Gallagher, Tramli, Wilkerson

Note: Commission strength on this date at 16 active members, 1 (Mayoral appointed) vacancy

Attending Guests: Former Commissioner Dara Wong, Phoebe Maffei, Stephen Pendas. (Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was also in attendance.)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Guy (2nd, Comm. Towers)**. In discussion, **Comm. Caldera** raised question as to why his two suggested Agenda Items were not included on current Agenda, noting, for the record, that this was the first time that he had ever requested an Agenda Item. **Pres. Ramirez** replied that it is his prerogative, as President, to accept or deny Agenda requests, and he remains opposed to discussion of the 2 submitted items. After further objections by **Comm. Caldera**, **Sec'y Noetzel** raised a larger question about **Inclusion of Commissioners Agenda Requests**. After further discussion and advice by City Attorney, an agreement was reached to fully explore the procedures and policy around **Inclusion of Commissioner Requested Agenda Items, at the next VAC meeting**. With that, the question was called and the current Agenda, was approved as published.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of May 14, 2013 (as written by Secretary Noetzel) made by **Comm. Maffei (2nd Comm. Guy)**. Without further discussion a vote to accept the **Minutes for the 5/14/13, VAC Meeting**, as written, passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Stephen Pendas addressed the Commission to introduce his **Sunday Sailing Program**. His non-profit venture (operating out of Pier 40 every Sunday), involves bringing the experience of open water sailing to all however a special **Invitation is extended to the Veterans Community of San Francisco, including disabled veterans**.

Agenda Item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report;

President Ramirez addressed a concern that the City Operated '311' (non-emergency) information system was not very helpful for Veterans requesting information. He asked Commissioner Towers, in his capacity of Commission Coordinator of Social Media to look into the 311 website and phone information – to see if SFVAC can help with expansion of relevant information about services for area veterans.

B. Vice Presidents Report;

V.P. Towers reiterated that his role in the denial of Agenda items, as submitted by **Comm. Caldera**, was not personal, and encouraged him to continue to advocate for his issues, and future Agenda submittals.

C. Secretary's Report;

Secretary Noetzel reported on recent Commission Correspondence including:

1. A letter from the **SF War Memorial Commission** announcing **FREE SF Opera tickets for Veterans** (and guest) from S.F. Opera. Tix are for two different operas, on evenings of 7/1 and 7/3. Contact SFWMC for full details.
2. Email from **Comm. Dacumos** which included an attachment from a recent training session called **"Responding to the Homeless on our doorsteps."** The PDF file includes excellent info on available shelter services for those in need.
3. Email communication from **Nicole Wheaton**. She notes that she expects that the Mayor will be making an appointment to fill the vacant Commission Seat, in the very near future.

Agenda Item 3. - NEW Business

Comm. Guy announced that she has been attending negotiating meetings of the Armory Committee for acquisition of **Veterans services space at the San Francisco Armory**...and that she will report on progress as it occurs.

Agenda Item 4 – Old Business (Reports on ongoing issues)

A. Discussion and potential action on the subject of **City of S.F. policy on "Buy Back" of Active Duty Service Time**, to add to **Retirement credit for City Employees**. Unfortunately, **Comm. Tramli** not present to present on this issue, however **Pres.**

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: War Memorial Veterans Building - 401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 101

Tuesday, August 13, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of June 11, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report.

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Progress Report on update of Social Media pages on SFVAC Website.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business

- Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission Policy on Inclusion of Agenda Items as submitted by Commission members. **Potential Action** may include establishment of formal Policy in this area and/or amendment of Commission Bylaws.

4. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

A. Report on issues of needed improvements at Ft. Miley:

- > Improvement of directional STREET SIGNAGE (Comm. Wilkerson, Lead)

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on further developments within the Legislation Committee.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzelder@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214





Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Veterans Affairs Commission
City and County of San Francisco
City Hall, Room 053
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Date: Tuesday, 13 August, 2013
From: Commissioner Stephen S. Noetzel
To: VAC President E. Ramirez and all Commissioners
Subject: PROPOSED Amendment to existing VAC Bylaws

President Ramirez and Commissioners;

In accordance with Article IX. (Amendment of Bylaws) the proposed Amendment to existing VAC Bylaws is submitted for discussion and consideration as part of the published Agenda for the 8/13/13 General Meeting of the SFVAC. This submittal satisfies the "Amendment of Bylaws" provision (under Bylaws Article IX) which mandates that proposed amendments must be "submitted in writing at least one previous General Meeting of the VAC".

Having met this notice requirement the subject Amendment may be voted "up or down" at the SFVAC meeting of September 10, 2013.

TEXT of the proposed amendment (to Section 7b of Article IV), is highlighted in yellow, below.

ARTICLE IV. Officers (including Elections and Primary Duties)

Section 7. PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT.

The Primary Duties of the President Include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Preside over the General Meetings of the Commission.
- b. Author the AGENDA for such meetings while incorporating Agenda Item suggestions duly submitted by Commission Members. All duly submitted Agenda Items requested by members of the Commission shall be added to the Agenda as requested. During the Agenda Approval Process, any Item on the Published Agenda may be stricken from said Agenda, by appropriate motion, second, and majority vote of the Commission.
- (c) Represent the voice of the Commission at official meetings and functions (as per authorization and direction by Commission.
- (d) At start of term, present the broad Goals and Plans for the Commission and after gaining consensus support, guide the Commission in promulgation of established Goals and Plans.
- (e) Sign all Official Correspondence of the Commission, or, when Impractical, authorize Commission Secretary to sign "For the President".
- (f) Cast a tie-breaking vote (if needed) in any official vote taken by the Commission.
- (g) As the last official act of the Administration, present to the newly elected President a FINAL

DRAFT of the

ANNUAL REPORT of the Administration year, for consideration and ratification by the Commission.

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: August 13, 2013

Call to Order

Having achieved a **Quorum** (see Roll Call, below), the August Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by **President Eduardo Ramirez** at 6:00pm. Meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, Caldera, Dacumos, Gallagher, Guy, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong (10)

Absent and excused by President: Commissioners Baldonado (Illness),

Absent – UN-EXCUSED: Commissioners L. Burnette, M. Maffei, and M. Tramill

Note: Commissioners A. Crichlow, and W. Levin Resigned from Commission, effective 8/12/13.

Commission strength currently at 14 active members, with THREE (Mayoral appointed) vacancies.

Attending Guests: Former Commissioner Dara Wong, Peter Lauterborn, Amos Gregory, and Nelson Lum.

(Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was not in attendance.)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Wilkerson (2nd, Comm. Guy)**. Without further discussion the Draft Agenda was approved, as published.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of June 11, 2013 (as written by Secretary Noetzel) made by Comm.

Wilkerson (2nd Comm. Caldera): In Discussion, **Comm. Caldera** offered a minor correction to note that his Agenda Item Request for the subject meeting was the first such request that he has made. Minutes corrected to reflect this item. Without further discussion a vote to accept the **Minutes for the 6/11/13, VAC Meeting**, as amended, passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. **Peter Loutenbom** introduced himself as a **Legislative Aide to Supervisor Eric Mar**. He stated that he was appearing before the Commission to assure all that Supervisor Mar is actively seeking resolution to the lack of Street Signage to direct visitors to the VA Facility at Ft. Miley. He has had preliminary discussion with staff of both the MTA, and the VA, to develop a plan for signage improvement. He will keep us updated on progress on this issue.

Mr. Amos Gregory introduced himself as a Veteran/Artist who has been involved in an art project called Veterans Alley in San Francisco. The City has informally supported the 'Veteran Themed' ever-growing Mural in Shannon Alley in the Tenderloin area of S.F. Photos and depictions of the ongoing artwork are viewable at several websites. Mr. Gregory seeks endorsement for a formal name change of Shannon Alley, to VETERAN'S ALLEY. President Ramirez asked that this issue be placed on the agenda for the next VAC meeting to provide an opportunity for such Endorsement.

Mr. Nelson Lum, President of the American Legion War Memorial Commission offered advice on the current American Legion protocol for Veterans participation in public Pledge of Allegiance ceremonies. He stated that the proper protocol is for Veterans (in uniform or not) to stand at attention, **render a salute, but to remain silent during the pledge.** Comm. Noetzel pointed out that if such protocol were followed at VAC meetings, there is a **potential for a totally silent 'pledge'**, since all Commissioners are Veterans. **Comm. Wong** stated that he had some doubt that this is the final word on the Protocol. With that, **Comm. Towers** offered to **research this question and report his findings** on Pledge of Allegiance Protocol for Veterans, at the next VAC meeting. Pres. Ramirez asked him to do so.

Agenda Item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report:

President Ramirez opened his report by stating that he has no intention to stifle or inhibit the Democratic Process at a VAC meeting he is presiding over. He then followed with a public apology to Commissioner Caldera for barring inclusion of an Agenda item submitted by him. He further stated that his current policy is to include all Agenda Item Requests made by Commissioners, with potential for approval or deletion in a democratic fashion, during the Agenda Approval segment of each meeting.

Pres. Ramirez also introduced the notion of a **One Vet One Voice** concept. He expressed a vision that the City of San Francisco to become the model for Services to City Veterans. He stated that the concept supports the **Governors Inter-Agency Council on Veterans** in its commitment to focus on 4 primary areas of service, namely: **Health, Education, Housing, and Employment**. He stated that the Office of the Mayor is already "onboard" in support of this concept, and **requested that it be placed on the Agenda at the next VAC meeting for Endorsement Action.**

B. Vice Presidents Report:

V.P. Towers welcomed Commissioners back after the July Recess and stated that he had event items that he would cover in the ANNOUNCEMENTS segment.

[illegible]

Secretary Noetzel reported on recent Commission Correspondence including:

- Agenda Item 3. - NEW Business**

B. **Comm. Caldera** opened short discussion on the potential for holding a VAC meeting at an alternative location as a 'reach-out' effort to the community. He cited as examples, the Community Room at the recently opened Veterans Commons Housing Project at 150 Otis Street, and the VAC Medical Center at Ft. Miley. After some discussion, **Pres. Ramirez** asked **Comm. Caldera** to further research the potential for such Relocated meetings, and to report at the Sept. VAC meeting. **Comm. Caldera** said he would do so.

A. Report on **Female Veterans Issues**. Comm. Guy, reports that she recently attend a meeting of the S.F. Commission on Women's Issues, and that they expressed sincere interest in working with the SFVAC on issues specific to Female Veterans. She will continue to serve as Liaison on this important issue.

B. Comm. Caldera raised the question of a **potential leadership vacuum**, (in light of the **W. Levin Commission seat resignation**), with respect to the annual Veterans Day Parade, and the Memorial Day Presidio events. Comm. Noetzel offered to act as Liaison on these questions, and meet with Mr. Levin, and **Report back** to the Commission at the **September meeting**. **President Ramirez** asked him to do so.

- **LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY** reported that she has been appointed as a **Leadership Fellow**, (with the **Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans of America**) and in that role she is participating in an IAVA event called **'Summerstorm'**. In that role she recently met with legislative staff personnel in the **offices of both Sen. Feinstein, and Rep. Pelosi**. Several items of potential Federal legislation (with respect to veterans) were discussed. She will have further reports on future Agenda as Legislative Committee makes progress.
- **Comm. Wong** reported on the Email that he sent to Commissioners earlier in the day. It covered the **status of five (5) House of Representatives bills on legislation affecting veterans**, which have now been moved to the entire House for consideration and a potential vote. **Comm. Noetzel** asked if there was any 'overlap' in this list, with the bills that she mentioned. **She said that she would research this question, and report back to the Commission.**

Lead Comm. Caldera had no new items to report in this area. President Ramirez asked ALWMC President Nelson Lum to report on any new progress in this area. Comm. Lum reported that there was a SECOND meeting between members of the ALWMC, and Gen. Myatt, representing the interests of the War Memorial Buildings Board of Trust. He said that there are now ongoing negotiations between the ALWMC and the BOT, on Space Allocation for Veterans Groups and other Patriotic organizations, and that building remodel construction is 'on track' for a planned 6/15/15 re-opening.

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page. Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

Announcements.....Continued from previous page.

- **President Ramirez** announced that on **Thursday the 15th of August** there will be a **CLASS** (from 1-4pm) titled: **The Entrepreneur In You**. Location is the new Federal Building, at 90 7th St., Room B040.
- **President Ramirez** announced that **Wednesday August 28th** is the date of the next **Town Hall Collaborative** meetings. Location is the **CA/NV Room, second floor, at the Federal Building, at 450 Golden Gate Ave.** Link and details available on the VAC Website via the HomePage Facebook and Twitter logo buttons.
- **President Ramirez** announced that on the **5th of October, at the MISSION CULTURAL CENTER**, he will be presenting the **Second Annual Veterans Film Festival**, "with a focus on **SALUTE TO WOMEN**". He invites all Commissioners to bring suggestions in this regard directly to him.
- **Comm. Guy** announced that on **Saturday, October the 12th** there will be an **Alcatraz to Aquatic Park Swim event**, sponsored by a variety of bay area Veterans' Groups. **Comm. Guy promised to send out further information on this event after she attends an upcoming Planning meeting.** Link and details available on the VAC Website via the HomePage Facebook and Twitter logo buttons.
- **Comm. Dacumos** announced that the **S.F. Interfaith Council will honor veterans with a Thanksgiving Event in November.** She will be offering more details after upcoming Planning meetings.
- **Comm. Towers** announced availability of a **special offer from LinkedIn, available to US Military Veterans.** It includes a **free one year subscription to their Premiere Job Seekers Networking Service.** Link and details available on the VAC Website via the HomePage Facebook and Twitter logo buttons.

Agenda Item #8 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community. **Specific honors this month are accorded to the memory of JOSE JULIO SARRIA, a WWII veteran and a Pioneering LGBT Civil Rights leader, who recently passed at age 91. The Moment of Silence concluded the meeting.**

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:22pm

*Minutes of the 8/13/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel,
and Approved (as amended) at the VAC meeting of 9/10/13.*

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, September 10, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for *VAC Meeting of August 13, 2013* for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. OFFICERS REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Ramirez to report, including (but not limited to) introduction of his One Vet, One Voice service ethic (with full presentation under New Business).

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Report on his research on current Protocol for Veterans participating in public Pledge of Allegiance Ceremony.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business

- A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of the VETERAN'S ALLEY ART PROJECT in San Francisco - including potential request for a Street Name Change to formalize Veteran's Alley. (Guest Amos Gregory to present)
- B. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement for introduction of a "ONE VET, ONE VOICE, ONE LOCATION" service ethic to provide more effective services to area veterans, specifically in the areas of Health, Education, Housing, and Employment. (Lead: Pres. Ramirez).
- C. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding occasional RELOCATION of the site of one or more future VAC meetings, in an effort to 'reach out' to a broader community of veterans. Possible "on the road" meeting sites for a future VAC meeting includes (but is not limited to) the Veterans Commons Housing Project at 150 Otis Street, and the VAC Medical Center at Ft. Milley. (Comm. Caldera, Lead).
- D. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of a RESOLUTION in support of City Government Lawsuit to insure continuing operation of S.F. City College, thereby supporting the 1300 Veteran students attending (Comm. Noetzel, Lead).

4. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing Issues)

- A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Proposed Bylaws Change regarding new Commission Policy on Inclusion of Agenda Items as submitted by Commissioners. (Comm. Noetzel, Lead)
- B. Report on current status of Street Signage Improvements to direct drivers to best route to the VAC facilities at Ft. Milley (Comm. Wilkerson, Lead)

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on further developments within the Legislation Committee.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzelder@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214

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[illegible]

Secretary Noetzel also provided his REPORT to the Commission (as requested by Pres. Ramirez), on the **STATUS of the VETERAN'S DAY PARADE, and the MEMORIAL DAY PRESIDIO EVENT**, now that Commissioner Wallace Levin has resigned from the SEVAC. Sec'y Noetzel has met with Mr. Levin and reports his findings, as follows:

1. Both of the subject events have been **supported by the VAC** (ever since its inception, as the SF Veterans Affairs COUNCIL, in 1983, but **at no time** have the events been actual **PROJECTS** of the VAC, nor has there ever been any **oversight or control** by the SFVAC.
2. The subject **EVENTS** have always been **endorsed, supported and advertised** by the **SFVAC**, as highlighted on our Website Home Page....
3. The subject events have been **FUNDED**, over the years, by annual **GRANTS**, made by the **S.F. Arts Commission** under its Annual **GRANTS FOR THE ARTS** program. The **GRANTEE** is actually a local post of the **VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS**.

Mr. Levin assures the Commission that despite his resignation, he continues his organizing work to insure that these events remain viable and "ongoing" for the foreseeable future. With respect to the VETERAN'S DAY PARADE, he has been trying to find an agency or department within the City Government of San Francisco to take over responsibility of the planning and running of the Veterans Day event.

With respect to the ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY COMMEMORATION AT THE PRESIDIO, it has been run under the auspices of the PRESIDIO TRUST, and most of the Event Funding is derived from that Agency.

Sec'y Noetzel concluded his REPORT by suggesting that the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission **continue to support** and endorse these events, each year, but since we have neither a staff or a funding mechanism, **the extend of our official involvement should be limited to our Endorsement**, while individual Commissioners continue their personal supportive efforts.

Agenda Item 3. - NEW Business

- A. Pres. Ramirez re-introduced this **Potential Action** Agenda item, regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of the VETERAN'S ALLEY ART PROJECT in San Francisco – including potential request for a Street Name Change to formalize Veteran's Alley. Secretary Noetzel offered a formal Motion to Endorse this project (Comm. Maffel 2nd). In discussion Comm. Caldera suggested that we TABLE further action and discussion to a future meeting as the "prime mover" of the initiative (Mr. Amos Gregory) is out of the country and would like to be present for this deliberation. **President Ramirez** agreed and the item is TABLED for future action.
- B. Pres. Ramirez again introduced this **Potential Action** Agenda item, regarding the regarding Commission support and possible endorsement for introduction of a "ONE VET, ONE VOICE, ONE LOCATION" service ethic to provide more effective services to area veterans, specifically in the areas of Health, Education, Housing, and Employment. He said that his hope is to have this program included in the Space Planning negotiations for the future of Veterans Services in the War Memorial Veterans Building. He stated that there is **growing support for the concept**, including interest from many potential supporters and potential participants, including "Craig's List" founder Mr. Craig Newmark, The S.F. Bar Association, the Governors Inter-Agency Council on Veterans, the County Veterans Service Organizations, Swords to Plowshares, and local banks and other businesses. **Comm. Towers** suggested that what we actually have, at this point, is a CONCEPT, rather than a Program. He said that the Commission should support further development of the concept. **Comm. Noetzel** then offered a MOTION that the SFVAC Endorse the CONCEPT of the "ONE VET, ONE VOICE, ONE LOCATION" program, to be further developed by Pres. Ramirez (2nd. Comm. Towers). In discussion, Comm. Caldera offered support for the Motion, stating that the program can and should be fully developed and instituted and that a LETTER in support of the concept (to the City Government) should be added to the motion. **Comm. Noetzel** accepted the suggested amendment to his MOTION. After further discussion, the question was called and a VOTE was held on a MOTION to support "ONE VET, ONE VOICE, ONE LOCATION" initiative as a CONCEPT, and that a LETTER in support of the concept, be written to the City Government. The MOTION carried, with 2 abstentions.
- C. Pres. Ramirez reviewed this Agenda item for Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding occasional RELOCATION of the site of one or more of the Monthly General Meetings of the Commission as an "outreach effort" to connect with a broader community of veterans. He turned to **Comm. Caldera** as Lead Commissioner on this effort, for his report. **Comm. Caldera** announced that the VETERANS COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER now operating out of its offices and studios at 1720 Market Street, would welcome the Commission to hold a trial meeting at their facility. **Comm. Caldera** followed with a Motion hold a 'trial meeting' at the VCMC. (2nd. Comm. Noetzel). MOTION: That the NOVEMBER 12, 2013 VAC Meeting shall be held at the Veterans Community Media Center (at 1720 Market Street). After some discussion, the question was called and a VOTE was held on a MOTION. Passed by majority vote. **Comm. Caldera** will complete arrangements to hold the NOVEMBER 12, 2013 VAC Meeting at the Veterans Community Media Center (1720 Market Street).

- D. Pres. Ramirez opened for discussion and **Potential Action** the issue of the potential CLOSURE of the S.F. City College system due to accreditation withdrawal. He turned to **Comm. Noetzel** as Lead Commissioner for further action however **Comm. Noetzel** requested that this item be TABLED for a report at a future VAC meeting so that the impact of the City of S.F. Lawsuit (against the Board of Accreditation) can be reviewed, and so that the impact of reduces enrollment (by veterans) because of the potential on non-accreditation can be further studied. Pres. Ramirez then tabled this item for action at a future VAC meeting. The issue was TABLED for action at the October meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – Old Business (Reports on ongoing issues).

- A. Pres. Ramirez opened for discussion and **Potential Action** the issue of a Proposed Bylaws Change regarding new Commission Policy on Inclusion of Agenda Items as submitted by Commissioners. He turned to Lead Commissioner S. Noetzel on this issue for further development. Secretary Noetzel reminded Commissioners that he included with the recent mailing, an information sheet that defined the **TEXT** for a potential Commission Bylaws amendment in this regard, noting that the initial requirement for a Bylaws change (i.e. previous month presentation of suggested amendment) had been accomplished and that we could now move forward with an "Up or Down vote" on the issue. After his review of the process, Comm. Noetzel made a MOTION that we adopt the proposed changes to the Bylaws, as offered. (2nd, Comm. Maffei). In discussion, Comm. Caldera offered a suggestion of a minor addition to the proposed amendment, namely to add the words "or tabled". The new amendment text in **bold italics, below**, would therefore read:

Article IV. Officers, Section 7. PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT.

The Primary Duties of the President include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Preside over the General Meetings of the Commission.
- b. Author the AGENDA for such meetings while incorporating Agenda Item suggestions duly submitted by Commission Members. *all duly submitted Agenda Items requested by members of the Commission shall be added to the Agenda as requested. During the Agenda Approval Process, any item on the Published Agenda may be stricken or tabled, from said Agenda, by appropriate motion, second, and majority vote of the Commission.*

Having accepted this minor change the question was called and a **VOTE** was held. The Motion **PASSED** without objection and the Bylaws are hereby **AMMENDED**, as state above.

- B. Pres. Ramirez opened for discussion and Potential Action the issue of Street Signage Improvements to direct drivers to best route to the VAC facilities at Ft. Miley. Comm. Wilkerson, who is Lead in this effort, reported that he is continuing his research and discussions on this issue and will make a full Report when significant progress has been made. The item was TABLED for review at a future meeting.
- B. At this point Comm. Caldera raised a question regarding the recent RESIGNATION of Commissioner Mary Tramil, asking if she had submitted a formal Letter of Resignation. Secretary Noetzel answered that she had "resigned" via Email announcement only, and that she had been advised that a formal Letter of Resignation is required so that her Commission Seat (BOS #2) could be listed as VACANT. Comm. Caldera then suggested that as we now have a total of FOUR vacancies, this might be a good time for the Commission to consider a formal request for a DELETION of the two Commission Seats most recently added. After some discussion, President Ramirez agreed that this is an issue that should be added to the AGENDA for the next Commission meeting for discussion and potential action.

Agenda Item 5 – Veterans related LEGISLATION.

As LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY was absent, President Ramirez TABLED this item for inclusion at a future meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Lead Comm. Caldera had no new items to report in this area. President Ramirez announced that a Construction-in-progress "walk through" of the site was scheduled for some time in November. Comm. Noetzel suggested that the Commission should certainly have a presence at such an event. Pres. Ramirez agreed and said he will keep the Commission informed of this opportunity as plans are formalized.

Agenda Item 7 – Announcements

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page.

Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at:

<http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

Announcements....Continued from previous page.

- **President Ramírez** announced that the **Second Annual Veterans Film Festival** will be held on the **5th of October**, at the **MISSION CULTURAL CENTER**, from 12 noon to 6pm. Scheduled films include "Camouflage Closet" and "Sandstone". There will also be musical performance and other attraction. Pres. Ramírez will be distributing **FLYERS** for the event and full details will be added to the Social Media pages of the VAC Website.
- On **Saturday, October the 12th** there will be an **Alcatraz to Aquatic Park Swim** event, sponsored by a variety of bay area Veterans' Groups. Details available on the VAC Website via the HomePage Facebook and Twitter logo buttons.
- On **Tuesday the 26th of November** the **S.F. Interfaith Council** is sponsoring a **Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast**. **Comm. Dacumos** announces that the theme this year is: "**Honoring Veterans and the Faith Communities that serve Them**". It will be at the **Hotel Kabuki 1625 Post St. S.F.** A **FLYER**, with full details will be added to the Social Media pages of the VAC Website.

Agenda Item #8 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community. **The Moment of Silence concluded the meeting.**

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:19pm

Minutes of the 9/10/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and Approved with minor corrections, at the VAC meeting of 10.8/13

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City & County of San Francisco

Tuesday, October 8, 2013, 6:00pm

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

OCT - 2 2013

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for *VAC Meeting of August 13, 2013* for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. *(Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).*

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Ramirez to report, including (but not limited to) introduction of his One Vet, One Voice service ethic (with full presentation under New Business).

B. Vice Presidents Report: V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Report on his research on current Protocol for Veterans participating in public Pledge of Allegiance Ceremony.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications

3. NEW Business

- A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding occasional RELOCATION of the site of the **NOVEMBER 12, 2013 VAC Meeting** to the **Veterans Community Media Center** (at 1720 Market Street). This effort to 'reach out' to a broader community of veterans was led by **Comm. Caldera**, who will report on arrangements made and lead further discussion.
- B. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding **Commission support and possible endorsement of a RESOLUTION** in support of **City Government Lawsuit** to insure continuing operation of **S.F. City College**, thereby supporting the **1300 Veteran students attending** (**Comm. Noetzel**, Lead).
- C. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding **Commission support for a formal request to RESCIND** the **December 2009 City Code authorization** which **added TWO Commission Seats** (one **Mayoral Appointed**, one **BOS**), thereby returning **Commission strength to the original authorized membership of 15 (fifteen)**.
- D. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding **Commission support and possible endorsement of the CYBERPATRIOT program**, a national high school **Cyber Defense Competition**, sponsored by the **Air Force Association**.
- E. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding the **BACKLOG of CLAIMS at the VA**. **Commission will reserve reasonable time for presentation/Discussion of this issue by both Guests and Commissioners**.
- F. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding **Calif. Legislature Bill AB639, the CA Homeless Veterans Services Bill**. **Commission will reserve reasonable time for presentation/Discussion of this issue by both Guests and Commissioners**.

4. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

- A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of the **VETERAN'S ALLEY ART PROJECT** In San Francisco – including potential request for a Street Name Change to formalize Veteran's Alley. (Guest Amos Gregory to present)
- B. Discussion and **Potential Action** to Endorse the October 12th Veterans Challenge Swim event called **"TAKE THE ROCK"** as introduced by event leader Mr. Maurice Delmer, at the September VAC meeting.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on further developments within the **Legislation Committee**.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm, Caldera, Lead)

[illegible]

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzelder@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214

This Document is Official Business of the VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION, City and County of San Francisco. As such It is part of the official PUBLIC RECORD of the City/County of San Francisco.

PUBLIC ACCESS:

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For information on your rights under the Sunshine ordinance (Chapter 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code), or to report a violation of the ordinance, please contact: Mr. Chris RUSTON, Administrator, Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, at telephone # 415-554-7724.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

DISABILITY ACCESS

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Note to Commissioners: If you know beforehand that you will NOT be able to attend the meeting for this AGENDA, please advise Commission Secretary
S. Noetzel via Telephone (415.378.8214) or Email: noetzelder@gmail.com

[illegible]

Finally, **Secretary Noetzel** reminded all that at the next meeting of the VAC (i.e., meeting of Nov. 12, 2013) as per our Bylaws, the **NOMINATION PROCESS** for the 2014 Commission Officers will commence. He asked all Commissioners to consider what Office they might like to seek for the new term.

Agenda Item 3. - NEW Business

A. **RELOCATION of the meeting site of the NOVEMBER 12, 2013 VAC Meeting.** Lead Commissioner J. Caldera reported that all arrangements have been made, to hold the **NOVEMBER 12 meeting of the SFVAC**, at the **Veterans Community Media Center** (at 1720 Market Street). This effort to 'reach out' to a broader community of veterans was affirmed by the Commission by acclamation. Special ANNOUNCEMENT efforts will be made to advertise the special November VAC Meeting Location.

B. RESOLUTION in support of **City Government Lawsuit to Inure continuing operation of S.F. City College**. **Lead Commissioner S. Noetzel** introduced a **DRAFT of a RESOLUTION** in support of the 1300 Veteran students at SFCC who remain in jeopardy for future studies should SFCC close as a result of loss of accreditation. Resolution includes **support for lawsuit** filed by **City Attorney Dennis Herrera**, **against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)**. Noetzel makes a motion that the VAC adopt the draft Resolution (2nd. Comm. Baldonado). Pres. Ramirez asked City Attorney Snodgrass if the language of the Draft Resolution includes any language that is illegal or lacks standing. He replies that it does not. In discussion, **Comm. Maffei** suggests in his opinion the VAC should not take any position regarding an active lawsuit, and that in his opinion, the SFVAC Resolution should not comment on the pending litigation. **President Ramirez** rules that the **Issue is TABLED** for further study, and **asks Commissioners Noetzel and Maffei** to work together to develop another DRAFT acceptable to both, and return to the Commission for Action under a future Agenda.

C. Formal request to **REDUCE Commission Size to the original 15 Member authorization**. Lead, Comm. Noetzel opens with a review of current Commission Roster, noting that we currently have **FOUR opened seats** (i.e. three Mayor appointed, and one BOS appointed). He reviews the circumstances and motivation for the **2009 City Code change**, which increased the number of VAC Commission seats from the traditional 15 members, to 17 (i.e. City Ordinance 245-09). He reviewed the difficulty we have had in reaching quorum due to the four resignations, and difficulty in finding replacement candidates for appointment. He then presented for consideration a DRAFT of a Letter to City Leadership, Subject: **Request to RESCIND City Ordinance 245-09 thereby Returning Commission Strength to the original fifteen members**. The letter points out that the current VAC exceeds the diversity motivation behind the subject Ordinance and that as we currently have a vacancy in both Mayoral and BOS appointed seats, this is a perfect time to RESCIND the ordinance, and return the Commission to a more workable and efficient **fifteen (15) members**. Comm. Noetzel makes a MOTION that the Commission authorizes President Ramirez to forward this letter on behalf of the Commission (2nd, Comm. Maffei). After some discussion, the Question was called and a vote taken. The motion **PASSED unanimously**. The letter will be signed by President Ramirez and sent to the Mayor and BOS President.

D. Potential Commission endorsement of **CYBERPATRIOT program**. **President Ramirez** made a presentation of the CYBERPATRIOT program, introducing it as an extension of the STEM PROGRAM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math). The STEM program is supported and endorsed by many entities, including the Air Force Association. It includes a competition where students compete for prizes for innovation on the STEM fields of study. He stated that **UC Berkeley recently increased funding for research in its CYBER DEFENSE studies**, within their STEM program. **Pres. Ramirez** concludes that VAC support for the CYBERPATRIOT program has potential for getting veterans into UC Berkeley to study in this field, and **requests a MOTION** for endorsement and a Letter to City Government in support of the CYBERPATRIOT program. **MOTION is made by Comm. Noetzel**. After repeated calls for a **SECOND**, the **motion falls for lack of a second**. **Pres. Ramirez** advises further research into the program by Commissioners, and will return it to a future Agenda if there is interest within the Commission.

E. **BACKLOG OF CLAIMS at the VA.** Guest **Craig Newmark** (founder of Craig's List, and longtime supporter of the Veterans Success Center) spoke about his interest in "getting the word out" to recent veterans, with respect to some of the local help and programs available to bay-area veterans. Also, he spoke of a new initiative to work with VA leadership on the potential of mitigating some of the Claims Backlog via Institution of an Electronic Claims Filing System. Mr. Newmark concluded with a promise to follow up with appropriate VA leadership in an effort to merge the efforts of various Veterans Service Organizations and the VA on accelerated resolution of the Claims Backlog.

F. Potential Commission endorsement of Calif. Legislature Bill AB639, the CA Homeless Veterans Services Bill. **Comm. Noetzel** opens by introduction of a DRAFT ADVICE LETTER to City Administration & Leadership, requesting their Support and endorsement of this important piece of legislation which would enable use of previously authorized funds to help Veterans and their families find housing in rental properties, as well as home ownership. **Comm. Noetzel** read the text of his DRAFT LETTER into the record and made a MOTION that the Commission authorizes **President Ramirez** to forward this letter on behalf of the Commission (2ND, **Comm. Baldonado**.) After some discussion, and syntax corrections, the Question was called and a vote taken. The motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**. The letter will be signed by **President Ramirez** and sent to the Mayor and BOS President. **NOTE:** Further action on this issue was PRECLUDED as Governor Brown signed AB639 Into LAW, a mere 2 days after the meeting.

Agenda Item 4. - Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

A. Potential Action regarding Commission endorsement of the VETERAN'S ALLEY ART PROJECT in San Francisco. Pres. Ramirez re-introduced Mr. Amos Gregory (artist and founder of the Veteran's Ally Project). Mr. Gregory reviewed his progress on the multi-mural project, including plans for additional new murals by Veteran Artists, and a scheduled "walk through" of the project by City Officials scheduled for 10/15/13. The review by city officials is part of a formal process in a hopeful RE-NAMING of the Alley as VETERAN'S ALLY. After Mr. Gregory provided additional informative comments about growth of similar projects inspired by the original right here in San Francisco, Comm. Noetzel revived his earlier MOTION, namely that the SFVAC **ENDORSES** the Veterans Alley Art Project and the Initiative to RE-NAME the subject Alley as Veterans Alley....and that the Commission Appoints Commissioner JOHN GALLAGHER as Liaison to work with all interest parties in the interest of **accomplishing the Name Change Goal.** (2nd, Comm. Baldonado). In discussion Comm. Dacumos raised a question as to the current name of the Alley and its origin. Mr. Gregory replied that the current name, SHANNON WAY has its origins in the Irish American influence that grew from an earlier population of the neighborhood. He added that if the name change were made, City policy provides for a 5-year Transition Period where both names would appear on street signs. The Question was called and a vote taken. **The motion PASSED unanimously.**

B. Potential Action regarding Commission endorsement of the 10/12/13 Veterans Challenge Swim event called "TAKE THE ROCK". Lead Comm. Guy informed the Commission that the event was still planned, but event leader Mr. Maurice Delmer has announced that the event is now on "hold" due to the looming potential of a curtailment of government services (affecting Alcatraz Island). Meanwhile the event is still planned, and Comm. Guy made a MOTION (2nd, Comm. Noetzel) that the SFVAC **ENDORSES** the "TAKE THE ROCK" Veterans Challenge Swim Event. After minimal additional discussion, the Question was called and a vote taken. **The motion PASSED unanimously.** The event will be advertised on the VAC Website social media pages as a **VAC ENDORSED event.**

Agenda Item 5 – Veterans related LEGISLATION.

As LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY was absent, President Ramirez TABLED further discussion in this area.

Agenda Item 6 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Lead Comm. Caldera had no new items to report in this area.

Agenda Item 7 – Announcements

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page.

Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at:

<http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

- **Saturday, October 12, 2013: Alcatraz to Aquatic Park Swim event,** sponsored by a variety of bay area Veterans' Groups. Details available on the VAC Website via the HomePage Facebook and Twitter logo buttons.
- **Sunday, November 10, 2013: The 2013 VETERANS DAY PARADE,** Parade units form starting at 10am at Market and 2nd Streets. See website: sfveteransdayparade@gmail.com. Contingency Participation application available on Facebook page of VAC website, url: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>
- **Tuesday the 26th of November: S.F. Interfaith Council Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast.** Theme: "Honoring Veterans and the Faith Communities that serve them". Hotel Kabuki 1625 Post St. S.F. Details on Social Media pages of the VAC Website.

Agenda Item #8 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community. **The Moment of Silence concluded the meeting.**

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:32pm

Minutes of the 10/8/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and Approved as written, at the VAC meeting of 11/12/13.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, November 12, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

NOTE: Special Meeting LOCATION – THIS MEETING ONLY:

Veterans Community Media Center – 1720 Market St. San Francisco, CA 94102

President Eduardo “Eddie” RAMIREZ, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of October 8, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Eddie Ramirez

B. Vice Presidents Report; V.P. Towers to report, including (but not limited to):

- > Report on his research on current Protocol for Veterans participating in public Pledge of Allegiance Ceremony.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications including, but not necessarily limited to:

- > STATUS of TRAMIL resignation and BOS Seat #2.
- > STATUS of VAC request for Reduction of authorized positions.
- > STATUS of Calif. Legislature Bill AB639, the CA Homeless Veterans Services Bill.

3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2014 Term.

- A. Secretary to distribute copies of portions of the ByLaws, which pertain to, and describe the Duties and Responsibilities of each of the 3 Officer Positions that constitute the Executive Board.
- B. President to open floor for NOMINATIONS, for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, in accordance with established ByLaws Secretary to Record all Nominations.

4. NEW Business

- A. Discussion and Potential Action regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of the VETERANS COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER (VCMC). Co-Directors Ellison Horne and JeanCharles Morris to provide introduction of its MISSION, goals, and recent activities of our Venue Host for this meeting.

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing issues)

- A. Discussion and Potential Action regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of a RESOLUTION in support of City Government Lawsuit to insure continuing operation of S.F. City College, thereby supporting the 1300 Veteran students attending (Comm. Noetzel, Lead).

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY to report on further developments within the Legislation Committee.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzelder@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL, **however the location of the November 12, 2013 meeting has been RELOCATED TO THE Veterans Community Media Center – 1720 Market St. San Francisco, CA 94102**

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

DISABILITY ACCESS

THE Veterans Community Media Center – 1720 Market St. is wheelchair accessible facility.

Note to Commissioners: If you know beforehand that you will NOT be able to attend the meeting for this AGENDA, please advise Commission Secretary S. Noetzel via Telephone (415.378.8214) or Email: noetzel@gmail.com

**GETTING TO THE NOVEMBER 12 VAC MEETING, at the
Veterans Community Media Center....at 1720 Market St., S.F. 94102.**



NOTE: The RED 'A' icon on this map indicates your destination: 1720 Market St.

For those who **DRIVE...** I have placed some green X's where (metered) parking is often available (around 6pm in the evening), on **VALENCIA STREET**

For those who take PUBLIC TRANSIT:

- **Closest MUNI METRO STATION:** Van Ness (One block walk) south along Market to # 1720.
- **MUNI Light Rail (along Market) :** the 98F
- **MUNI Busses....along Market Street:** K, L, M, N

BART...Is not very close. A long 6-block walk, south, along Market St....from the Civic Center Station



Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: Nov. 12, 2013

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum (see Roll Call, below), the November Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order at the announced SPECIAL LOCATION: The VETERANS COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER, 1720 Market St., S.F. CA, by President Eduardo Ramirez at 6:05pm. Meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, , Burnette, Caldera, Dacumos, Gallagher, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong (11) Absent and excused by President: Comm. D. Guy

Absent – UN-EXCUSED: Commissioners R. Baldonado

Note: Commission strength currently at 13 active members, with a total of FOUR vacancies, (i.e. THREE Mayoral appointed and ONE (BOS Appointed)).

Attending Guests: Dara Wong, Brendan Rogers, Carlo Garza, Ken Eisen, JeanCharles Morris.

(Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was unable to attend)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by **Comm. Caldera (2nd, Comm. Maffei)**. After minor discussion to add (in the Honors Report), recognition of those who perished in the recent typhoon in the Phillipian Islands (**as suggested be Comm. Caldera**), **the Draft Agenda was approved, as modified.**

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of Sept 10, 2013 (as written by Secretary Noetzel) made by Comm. Caldera (2nd Comm. Dacumos). Without further discussion, the subject *MINUTES were Approved, as Written, by majority vote.*

Agenda Item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Brendan Rogers introduced himself as a City Resident and a Chief Petty Officer in the only remaining deployable Reserve unit in the Bay Area. Mr. Rogers is interested in the proceedings of the Commission and offered his support.

Mr. Carlo Garza introduced himself, a college student and also a reservist, who also wished to express support for the work of the Commission.

President Ramirez closed the Public Comment section by **thanking all who attended as guests** and indicating that the express purpose of an occasional change of the VAC General Meeting location was precisely to bring in some of the younger veterans who live and/or work in the city.

Agenda Item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report:

President Ramirez stated that it will take a continuing "word of mouth" effort to reach out to some 37k veterans living in or near the city, to introduce them to the wide variety of Veterans Services available to them in the Bay Area. He invited everyone attending to review the VAC website and see all of the activities and Services available to veterans and described therein. He closed by **thanking all those who volunteered to make the Veterans Day Parade (in S.F.) such a success on Sunday, the 10th of November.**

B. Vice Presidents Report;

V.P. Towers reported on the continuing updates that he has made on the SFVAC Website, including many new postings on the Social Media Pages (i.e. Facebook, and Twitter). He announced that there is **evidence of expanding public Interest in the entire Website**. Finally, he reported on his **research on current Protocol** for Veterans participating in **public Pledge of Allegiance Ceremony**. In describing and reading the official American Legion protocols in this area, there was significant comment and divergent input from several Commissioners. Discussion in this area closed in general recognition that there **seems to be no agreed-upon "over-arching" protocol amongst several competing Veterans Agencies or Veterans Support groups, for Veterans Protocol while reciting The Pledge**. Comm. Towers said he would continue research in this area, and post any new or significant findings on the subject, on the SFVAC Website. He closed with several announcements of upcoming events for Veterans (See Item 8, Announcements).

C. Secretary's Report;

Secretary Noetzel reported on 3 items.

1. STATUS OF TRAMIL RESIGNATION AND BOS SEAT #2. Sec'y Noetzel reported that office of Supervisor Yee (Chair of Rules Committee), as confirmed that they have received the Resignation Letter of Ms. Tramil, have posted the VACANCY of Seat #2, and are seeking candidates.

2. STATUS of VAC request for Reduction of authorized positions. Sec'y Noetzel reported that despite hand-delivery

C. Secretary's Report (Continued)

of the 10/10/13 Letters from **President Ramirez** (to Office of Mayor, and BOS President) on this subject, and follow-up emails by the Secretary, there has been no **response whatsoever from anyone in City Government on this Important Issue**. After considerable discussion as to the next steps to get action on this issue, **President Ramirez** announced that he would **"take this Issue on"** and personally follow up with the letter recipients, and get a response from them. He promised to **report back to the Commission** at the next meeting with results of his personal efforts on the issue.

3. **STATUS of Calif. Legislature Bill AB639, the CA Homeless Veterans Services Bill.** Sec'y Noetzel reported that just prior to sending out the Advice Letter (authorized by the Commission at the October meeting), the **BILL was passed by both houses of the California Legislature, and signed into law by Governor Brown**, a mere 2 days after the meeting. The Advice Letter was therefore not sent.

Agenda Item 3. - Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2014 Term.

A. Secretary Noetzel distributed copies of the current Commission **By-Laws**, making particular reference to Articles that provide a listing of the **PRIMARY DUTIES** of each elected officer. He reminded Commissioners that when they make **NOMINATIONS** to the various offices, they **verify beforehand** that the potential nominee is **aware of the Duties of the Office**, and is **WILLING to execute such duties**, if elected.

B. **President Ramirez** then moved to the **Nominating Process** to for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, Indicating that in accordance with the Bylaws, in addition to the current (November) meeting, **NOMINATIONS** for all positions will again be opened during the **DECEMBER** meeting, and **AGAIN**, for the third time, just prior to the **VOTE**, in the **JANUARY MEETING**. He started by opening the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Secretary*.

Comm. Wilkerson nominated current Secretary, Comm. Stephen NOETZEL for Secretary. Comm. Noetzel then declined the nomination. Comm. Caldera then nominated Comm. L. BURNETTE for Secretary. He accepted the nomination. After no further nominations for Secretary, Pres. Ramirez closed nominations for that position.

Pres., Ramirez then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Vice President.*

President Ramirez nominated Comm. Jordan TOWERS for V.P. Comm. Towers then declined the nomination. Comm. Burnette nominated Comm. Michael MAFFEI. He accepted the nomination. After no further nominations for V.P., Pres. Ramirez closed nominations for that position.

Pres., Ramirez then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission President.*

Comm. Wilkerson nominated current Comm. **Stephen NOETZEL** for President. He accepted the nomination. President Ramirez nominated current Comm. **Jordan TOWERS** for President. He accepted the nomination. After no further nominations for President, **Pres. Ramirez** closed nominations for all positions until next meeting.

To Review: The *current* list of accepted nominations for the 2014 term is:

- For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. L. BURNETTE
- For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. M. MAFFEI
- For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL and Comm. J. TOWERS

Agenda Item 4. NEW Business

A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of the **VETERANS COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER (VCMC)**. Co-Directors Ellsion Horne and Jean Charles Morris were not present for a presentation. Comm. Caldera then announced that the Lease Agreement was currently being re-negotiated and that the viability of the VCMC was currently 'in flux'. He requested that this discussion be TABLED until next month when there should be more clarity on the issue. Pres. Ramirez then TABLED this item as requested.

Agenda Item 5. Old Business.

A. Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding **Commission support and possible endorsement of a RESOLUTION in support of City Government Lawsuit to insure continuing operation of S.F. City College, thereby supporting the 1300 Veterans students attending.** Comm. Noetzel reported that he and Comm. Maffel met in conference and came to agreement on the essence of a revised Resolution. Comm. Maffel then provided further detail, indicating that a **new Draft Resolution will omit reference to the ongoing Lawsuit filed by the City Attorney, and concentrate more on affirmation of the efforts of City College Administrators to meet all requirements for continuing accreditation by the Accrediting Board in the hope that the school can remain opened and fully accredited so that Veterans and all students can continue their studies without disruption.** A **new Draft Resolution or Letter of Affirmation will be presented at the December VAC Meeting.** At close of discussion, Pres. Ramirez suggested that as the **new Chancellor (of SFCC) is a Veteran**, perhaps a meeting could be set up so that members of the Commission could bring our concerns about continuing education for the veteran students directly to him. The matter was tabled so that **Commissioners Noetzel and Maffel could make further progress.**

Agenda Item 6 – Veterans related LEGISLATION.

LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY began with an announcement that California Assembly Bill 218 had just been signed into law by Governor Brown. While not specifically limited to Veterans, the bill prohibits requesting criminal background information on the initial employment application for local and state government employees, with the goal of reducing unnecessary barriers to employment for the one in four adult Californians who have an arrest or conviction record. As California joins nine states and over 50 cities and counties across the United States that have adopted similar legislation, more troubled veterans will have opportunity to turn their lives around, and find jobs and careers.

In Federal Legislation, she reports that **HR2189** was recently passed by the House and now moves to the Senate. The Bill establishes within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) a commission or task force to: (1) evaluate the backlog of veterans' disability claims, including the current process used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate claims and appeals, the applicable laws and regulations, and the appeals process; (2) analyze possible improvements to the claims process; and (3) submit to the Secretary remedies and solutions for such backlog. The bill also includes an amendment called the **FASTER FILING ACT**, a cost-neutral, bipartisan bill that will accelerate VA claims turnaround times.

Comm. Weeby also reported that **HR1405** was also recently passed by the House of Representatives. It is an amendment to Title 38 of the US Code which provides an immediate Appeal Process when veterans are informed of a negative decision on claims submitted.

Finally, Comm. Weeby made brief mention of legislation-in-progress in the US Senate including Senate Bill **SB1558** which would require the VA to establish and Outreach Program to contact and serve veterans who may be unaware of services available to them. She noted that all of these Tracking Updates are part of the work of IAVA (Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans of America), a Veterans Service Organization that is heavily involved in initiation and advocacy of Federal Legislation to benefit Veterans.

Agenda Item 7 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Lead Comm. Caldera had no new items to report in this area.

Agenda Item 8 – Announcements

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page. Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

- **Tuesday the 26th of November: S.F. Interfaith Council Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast.** Theme: "Honoring Veterans and the Faith Communities that serve them". Hotel Kabuki 1625 Post St. S.F. Details on Social Media pages of the VAC Website.
- Comm. Caldera announced that there will be a meeting of the **Pride Parade Board**, to consider the pros and cons of Military Recruiters at the Parade. Details to follow.
- Comm. Burnette announced that he was recently employed by the VA. As a Vocational Rehab Specialist.
- Comm. Towers announced that VAC Commissioner Dottie Guy was recently honored in the Profiles in Courage portion of the annual Swards to Plowshares Dinner.

Agenda Item #9 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community, and In memory of the Filipino veterans and citizens who died in the recent typhoon that devastated the Philippines Islands

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:31pm

Minutes of the 11/12/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel, and Approved as written at the VAC meeting of 12/10/13.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, December 10, 2013, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of November 12, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Eddie Ramirez to report on various issues including (but not limited to), his meeting(s) with S.F. Government Officials regarding Commission Request to return Commission seats to the original 15 member configuration...and a RECAP of the VAC Administration Year

B. Vice Presidents Report; Vice President Jordan Towers to report on various issues.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications.

3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2014 Term (Round 2 of 3).

A. Secretary to REVIEW Nominations to date:

- > For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. L. BURNETTE
- > For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. M. MAFFEI
- > For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL and Comm. J. TOWERS

B. President to re-open floor for NOMINATIONS, for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, in accordance with current Bylaws. Secretary to Record all Nominations.

4. NEW Business

- A.** Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Initial DRAFT of the 2013 ANNUAL REPORT as written by V.P. Towers. in accordance with VAC Bylaws Article IV, Section 8: PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT.
- B.** Discussion and **Potential Action** to endorse the 70th Anniversary 4-Chaplains Commemoration Event in February. Commissioner J. Caldera to provide background and details.

5. Old Business. (Reports on ongoing Issues)

- A.** Discussion and **Potential Action** regarding Commission support and possible endorsement of a revised **RESOLUTION or Letter of Affirmation**, to urge City Government to expend all effort to insure continuing operation of S.F. City College, thereby supporting the education opportunities for the 1300 Veteran students attending. (Comm. Noetzel & Maffei, Lead).

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Comm. Weebly, (Lead) to report on further developments within the Legislation Committee.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Comm. Caldera, (Lead). Various Reports regarding developments in this area. (Comm. Caldera, Lead)

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzeldeer@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214

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Note to Commissioners: If you know beforehand that you will NOT be able to attend the meeting for this AGENDA, please advise Commission Secretary S. Noetzel via Telephone (415.378.8214) or Email: noetzelder@gmail.com

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: Dec. 10, 2013

Call to Order

Having achieved a **Quorum** (see Roll Call, below), the **December Meeting (of the SFVAC)** was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by **President Eduardo Ramirez** at 6:09pm. Meeting started with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, , Baldonado Burnette, Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong (12)

Absent – UN-EXCUSED: Commissioner J. Gallager

Note: Commission strength currently at 13 active members, with a total of FOUR vacancies, (i.e. THREE Mayoral appointed and ONE (BOS Appointed).

Attending Guests: Dara Wong, Ken Eisen, Francis Balanon, Ivan Seredini

(Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was unable to attend)

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. Wilkerson (2nd, Comm. Caldera). Without further discussion the **Draft Agenda was approved, as written**

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of November 12, 2013 (as written by Secretary Noetzel) made by **Comm. Caldera (2nd Comm. Wilkerson)**. Without further discussion , the subject ***MINUTES were Approved, as Written, by majority vote.***

Agenda item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no reply to a call for Public Comment

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report:

President Ramirez reported on his research into WHY there is little to no response from the City of San Francisco, to our **Advice Letters – especially the most recent**. He said he has learned that there are **two reasons**. First, that our letters regarding STATE LEGISLATION MATTERS should be going **directly to the State Legislation Committee, of the City/County of San Francisco**. Like the SFVAC, this 7-member Committee, is set up **for the express purpose of “making recommendations for endorsement, opposition, or neutrality, with respect to legislation pending before the State Legislature, that would affect the City and County.”** He recommended that we look into established pathways to feed our recommendations on pending State Legislation (applicable to Veterans) to and through this body, in the future.

Second, Pres., Ramirez reported on a meeting he had with Ms. Nicole Wheaton of the Office of the Mayor, with specific regard to our 10/9/13 letter to Mayor Lee. Subject: Request to RESCIND City Ordinance 245-09 thereby Restoring Commission Strength to the original fifteen members. President Ramirez reported that the view of the Office of the Mayor is that any reduction in commission size (at this point) might have the appearance of a reduction in the VOICE of Veterans and the Veterans community. President Ramirez stated that, after reflection, he agreed with this point of view. Comm. Noetzel spoke up to register his disagreement and reminded the commission that the reasons they voted to request this reduction remain valid, and that the Commission – even in its current 13-member configuration, includes ample diversity to represent a strong voice for all veterans of the City. Comm. Caldera also spoke to register his disagreement by reminding all that the Force Reduction Request we made would merely bring Commission Strength its 25-year historical level. **President Ramirez closed his Report** by stating that he had duly reported on responses he received with regard to these issues, and if the Commission was interested in pursuing these matters further, it certainly can be accomplished in the next VAC Administrative Year.

B. Vice Presidents Report:

V.P. Towers reported that he would reserve his comments for expression under **Agenda Item 4A** (below), as well as the Announcements portion of the Agenda.

C. Secretary's Report:

Secretary Noetzel reported that he had recently complied with a bi-annual mandate from the City Clerk, to update their official file on addresses and contact information for all sitting Commissioners. **Sec'y Noetzel** then inquired as to how many Commissioners had completed the On-Line Training Module on ETHICS and GOOD GOVERNMENT, and completed Certification that they had completed the Training module. **Commissioners WEEBY, DACUMOS and GUY** indicated that they had done so. **Comm. Towers** offered opinion that while the training is important, it is not an actual requirement of this Commission. He suggested that we look into a Legal Opinion on this question, to resolve the issue with clarity.

[illegible]

Agenda Item 6 – Veterans related LEGISLATION.

> **LEAD Commissioner Ann WEEBY** reported on **Federal (Veteran's Related) legislation that is currently pending.** She notes that IAVA (Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans of America) is involved in both authorship and advocacy for the passage of the following Bills at this time; those being:

1. Fully fund the VA in advance - HR 813 and S 932: These bills would fully fund the entire VA one year in advance. This means that when Congress is late with the budget (or shuts down the government) the VA already has its next year's budget on the books. The bill also allows the VA to plan ahead for the modernization efforts currently underway.

2. Combat sexual assault in the military by passing The National Defense Authorization Act. The NDAA has a robust package of reforms that would combat Military Sexual Assault, and improve the military justice system.

3. Charge in-state tuition for all veterans using GI Bill - HR 357 and S 944 These bills would require all schools that accept GI Bill dollars to charge the in-state tuition rate for veterans using the GI Bill. This closes a loophole where vets who (due to their military service) do not qualify as legal residents of any state, and thereby incur education costs that the GI Bill was designed to cover.

4. Ratify The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This is a treaty that would establish international standards based on the Americans with Disabilities Act, to ensure that Americans with disabilities will encounter better accessibility when traveling abroad.

> **Comm. Wong** reported on (CA) STATE Legislation with respect to Veterans and the Veterans Community, and noted that the **VFW Report** notes that during the **past State Legislative term**, some 45 "Veterans Bills" reached Governors office after passing both legislative houses, and that of these, **Governor Brown has signed 41 (of them) into law.**

Agenda Item 7 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Lead Comm. Caldera had left the meeting at this point however **Pres. Ramirez** reported that he had **recently participated in "Walk-Through"** tour to inspect construction progress to date. He reports that contractors have fully protected all sensitive architectural details as structural re-enforcement work continues. With removal of false ceilings many such details will be restored to the delight of future building users – including a significant restoral of warm, natural light as per original Building Design.

Agenda Item 8 – Announcements

Note: Most Announcements included in these Minutes are for events planned for dates far enough into the future so that they are meaningful after submission of Minutes. Announcements for "short-term" events are generally presented in postings on the VAC Facebook and/or Twitter pages. Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

- > **Comm. Dacumos** reported on the 11/26/13 San Francisco Interfaith Council **Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast**, noting that it was a great success and the theme: **"Honoring Veterans and the Faith Communities that serve them"** was well received.
- > **Pres. Ramirez** reminded all that the next **San Francisco Veterans Town Hall/Collaborative Meeting** will be on **WEDNESDAY the 18th of December**, at the Burton Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate Ave., (S.F.) in the CA/NV Room, with two sessions: 9 – 11am, and in the afternoon, from 3 – 5pm.
- > **Sunday, the 8th February, 2014** is the date of the **San Francisco observance** of the (above mentioned) **FOUR CHAPLAINS MEMORIAL** at **St Mary's Cathedral**. Full details available at the Memorial Website and/or American Legion-Department of California and/or the Social Media pages of the SFVAC Website.

Agenda Item #9 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

Pres. Ramirez presided over a Moment of Silence in memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item #10 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:20pm

Minutes of the 12/10/13 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Stephen S. Noetzel. and, (with minor corrections) approved unanimously at the VAC meeting of 1/14/14

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and/or Approval (Check Item)

MEETING AGENDA

President Eduardo "Eddie" RAMIREZ, Presiding

- Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of December 10, 2013 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

2. Officers REPORTS:

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6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Sitting Commissioners Invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation, including **Potential Action** in formation of a **Standing Committee on Veterans Related Legislation**.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Sitting Commissioners Invited to Report on report on new developments building construction and/or management, including **Potential Action** in formation of a **Standing Committee on War Memorial Veterans Building**.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary well prior to meeting, at: email noetzel@gmail.com or telephone 415-378-8214

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S. Noetzel via Telephone (415.378.8214) or Email: noetzel@gmail.com

Veterans' Affairs Commission - January 14, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - January 14, 2014

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Jan. 14, 2014

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by President Eddie Ramirez at 6:00pm, starting with the traditional **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners, Baldonado, Bumette, Caldera, Gallagher, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weebie, Wilkerson, Wong. (12)

Absent: Comm. D. Dacumos (excused; illness)

Note: Commission strength currently at 13 active members, with a total of four vacancies, (i.e. Three Mayoral appointed and one BOS appointed).

Attending Guests: Mr. Amos Gregory

Note: City Attorney W. Snodgrass was also in attendance.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. Wilkerson, 2nd by Comm. Caldera. Without further discussion, meeting Agenda was passed unanimously.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of December 10, 2013 (as written by Sec. Noetzel) made by Comm. Caldera (2nd Comm. Wilkerson). In discussion Comm. Wilkerson pointed out a spelling error, and Comm. Caldera requested the addition of Comm. Dacumos' reference to her commitment to advise the S.F. Interfaith Council regarding the Four Chaplains Memorial Event at St. Mary's Cathedral, at 6pm on February 8, 2014. Sec. Noetzel advised that he would insure the inclusion of the suggested changes in a corrected version of the Minutes. A vote was then taken and the Minutes for the 11/5/12, VAC meeting with suggested amendments passed unanimously.

Agenda item 1 – Call for public comment

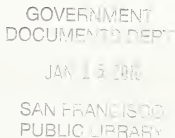
1. Guest Amos Gregory, founder of the Veterans Alley Project stated that despite our endorsement of the Project there were recently some negative comments about the Project. Sec. Noetzel asked if any members of the Commission were reported to have made such comments. Mr. Gregory said he was seeking a letter of apology from Commissioner Guy. At this point further discussion was curtailed. Sec. Noetzel closed the matter by reminding all that the SFVAC was on record as fully endorsing the Veterans' Ally Project. There was no further Public Comment.

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report President Eddie Ramirez to report on various issues including Recap/Review of the VAC in 2013. Book on Korea and "Thanks to the Commission".

B. Vice Presidents Report Vice President Jordan Towers to report on various issues, including, presentation of initial DRAFT of the 2013 Annual Report as written by V.P. Towers.

Note: This is a Potential Action Item. Status on Annual Report: Towers makes new commitment to complete initial DRAFT by Friday, the 17th of January.



C. Secretary's Report: Sec. Noetzel to report on recent correspondence/communications including reporting on disposition of previously passed City College Resolution.

Agenda Item 3. – Final nominations for VAC Officers for 2014 Term (Round 3 of 3).

A. President Ramirez re-opened the nominating process for each of the 3 Officer positions of the SFVAC,

starting with the position of Secretary. Secretary Noetzel indicated that there was one standing nomination for Secretary at present, Commissioner L. Bumette. Pres. Ramirez then opened the floor for nominations for the office of Commission Secretary. After 3 calls for additional nominations, hearing none further, nominations for Secretary were closed.

President Ramirez then re-opened the Nominations for the position of Vice President. Secretary Noetzel indicated that there was one standing nomination for Vice President, at present, Commissioner M. Maffei. Pres. Ramirez then opened the floor for nominations for the office of Vice President. After 3 calls for additional nominations, hearing none further, nominations for Vice President were closed.

President Ramirez then re-opened the Nominations for the position of President. Secretary Noetzel indicated that there had been three nominations for President; Comm. S. NOETZEL, Comm. J. TOWERS, and Comm. A. WEEBY. The Secretary then informed the Commission that in a recent email to VAC Officers, Commissioner WEEBY had WITHDRAWN her nomination. Sec. Noetzel stated that her name had therefore been stricken from the ballots. Pres. Ramirez thanked Comm. Weeby for her continuing service on the Commission. After 3 calls for additional nominations, hearing none further, nominations for President were closed.

To Review: Pre-printed election ballots will include the current list of accepted nominations for the 2014 term, to wit:

- B. For the office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. Bumette
- C. For the office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. Maffei
- D. For the office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. Noetzel, Comm. Towers

Agenda item 4. New Business – Candidate statements and election of the new Officers

A. President Ramirez then opened the floor to afford equal time for nominated candidates to announce their 'Platform', or

Administrative Plans, Goals, and Vision for the VAC, if elected.

B. President Ramirez then moved forward to administer a public ballot vote (as required by law) by distribution of

a pre-printed written ballot, for all 3 offices. Commissioners marked their ballots.

C. President Ramirez tasked guest Dara Wong and City Attorney W. Snodgrass to verify election results. He then announced the voting results, as follows:

- > For the office of VAC Secretary, Commissioner Bumette **received a total of TWELVE VOTES (12)**,

(Baldonado, Bumette, Caldera, Gallagher, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong.)

President Ramirez congratulated Comm. Bumette on his election to VAC Secretary, for the 2014 term.

- > For the office of VAC Vice President, Commissioner Maffei **received a total of TWELVE VOTES (12)**.

(Baldonado, Bumette, Caldera, Gallagher, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong.)

President Ramirez congratulated Comm. Maffei on his election to VAC Vice President, for the 2014 term.

- > For the office of VAC President, Commissioner Noetzel **received a total of NINE VOTES (9)**,

(Baldonado, Bumette, Gallagher, Guy, Maffei, Noetzel, Weebly, Wilkerson, Wong.)

- > **Commissioner TOWERS received a total of THREE VOTES (3)**, (Caldera, Ramirez, Towers.)

President Ramirez congratulated Comm. Noetzel on his election to VAC President for the 2014 term.

Comm. Ramirez then relinquished the Chair to newly Elected President Noetzel and staff, who presided over the balance of the meeting.

E. President Noetzel then presided over an open discussion regarding Goals and Plans for the Commission for 2014.

- Comm. Baldonado wants to focus on Veteran Employment alongside EDD and Comm. Bumette at the VA.
- Comm. Noetzel mentioned Veterans' Success Center needing help with lease and funding.

Agenda item 5 – Old Business

A. Discussion on how to proceed with Commission's December adoption of **RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE CITY EFFORTS TO KEEP CCSF OPENED & ACCREDITED**. Agreed upon distribution to any interested parties, with the exception of printing the letter and resolution on official VAC letterhead. Letter recipients mentioned were the Mayor, BOS, CCSF Chancellor and City Attorney Dennis Herrera.

Agenda item 6 – Veterans Related Legislation

No new updates

Agenda item 7 – War Memorial Veterans Building

No new updates

Agenda item 8 – Announcement

- 23Jan – Veterans Job Fair
- 24Jan – LinkedIn Mentoring Event
- Comm. Wong shared VJO mentorship and asked interested to contact Alexandria Kay.
- Comm. Baldonado to follow-up on SFVAC Ft. Miley signage
- Comm. Bumette invites all to assist in employment of Veterans and sharing hiring contacts. Note: Comm. Bumette is a Veteran Hiring Specialist at the VA and can be reached at office 415-489-3333.

Agenda item 9 – Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless Veterans and Veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the Veterans' and armed services' communities.

10. AJORNMENT. Meeting Adjourned at 7:15pm

Minutes of the 1/14/14 VAC Meeting written by VAC Secretary Lee Burnette, and approved (after edits) by unanimous vote of the Commission at the General Meeting of March 11, 2014



San Francisco Veterans' Affairs Commission

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

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MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 6:00pm
Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

Commissioners Baldonado, Caldera, Dacumos, Gallagher, Guy, Ramirez, Towers, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong
Secretary Burnette, V.P. Maffei, and President Noetzel

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Current Meeting Agenda (Action Item)
4. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes for January 14, 2014 (Action Item)
5. Call for Public Comment
6. Officers' Reports:
 - A. President's Report President Noetzel to report on various issues including (but not limited to), an opened, transparent & Democratic VAC year, with shared respect for all. Plus report on misc. correspondence & communications.
 - B. Vice President's Report Vice President Maffei to report on various issues.
 - C. Secretary's Report Secretary Burnette to report on recent correspondence/communications.
7. Old Business
 - A. Commissioner Towers to present initial DRAFT of the 2013 ANNUAL REPORT. (Potential Action Item)
Discussion on potential revisions as voted by Commission, and potential ratification vote.
8. New Business
 - A. Discussion of recent mis-application of Street Artist Vendor Fees Law exempting Veterans from such fees. (Hyperlink) (Comm. Ramirez, Lead)
 - B. Discussion of Emailing Agenda, Minutes. Also the adding of Commissioner's biographies and Commission tasks on the VAC Website. (Comm. Burnette)
9. Veterans Related Legislation

- A. Sitting Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans' legislation.

10. War Memorial Veterans Building

- A. Sitting Commissioners invited to report on new developments building construction and/or management.

11. Announcements

12. Honors Report and Moment of Silence

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless Veterans and Veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the Veteran's and Armed Services communities.

13. Adjournment

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary Lee Burnette prior to meeting at: SFVACSecretary@Gmail.com or telephone 619.888.8987.

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Sunshine Ordinance Task Force •
City Hall, Room 244 •

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place •San Francisco, CA 94102-4689 •

Phone: (415) 554-7724, Fax: (415) 554-5784 •

Email: sotf@sfgov.org•

Copies of the Sunshine Ordinance can be obtained from the Clerk of the Sunshine Ordinance •Task Force, at the San Francisco Public Library, and on the City's website at •<http://www.sfgov.org>.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm on the Second Tuesday of every month but July, and are held in City Hall Room 416.

Meeting confirmation, and specific announcement of General Meetings are made via public posting of meeting agendas as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings and archive of Meeting Minutes are available on the [Veterans' Affairs Commission website](#) and are also available for Public View and inspection at the 5th Floor Government Information Center of the San Francisco Main Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Contact the Documents Librarian at telephone number 415-557-4472.

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - February 11, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - February 11, 2014

Corrected

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of Feb. 11, 2014

Call to Order

Meeting was never called to order, rather officially CANCELED at 6:25pm due to failure to achieve QUORUM

Official Attendance Record as follows:

Roll Call

Commissioners in attendance for meeting (7):

R. Burnette, J. Caldera, D. Dacumos, D. Guy, S. Noetzel, A. Weeby, R. Wong

Commissioners with Excused Absence (5)

R. Baldonado; Illness

M. Maffei; Travel

E. Ramirez; Calendar conflict

B. Smith; Travel

J. Towers; Not seeking re-appointment to Commission. No further attendance requirement

Commissioners Unexcused Absent - No Notification (2)

J. Gallagher; E. Wilkerson)

Note: Current Commission Strength: Fourteen members (14), with Three vacancies (2 Mayoral; 1 BOS appointed)

Record Certified by:

Stephen S. Noetzel, President

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, March 11, 2014, 6:00pm
MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA
President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of January 14, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President S. NOETZEL to report on various issues including (but not limited to),

1. Introduction and Welcome of TWO Commissioners (J. Marshall & B. Smith) recently appointed by Mayor Lee.
2. Review of VAC Bylaws, Article V. "Meetings", especially Sections 5a thru 5e regarding Attendance.
3. Recap of Ethics Training Class of 2/25/14 and Training Status of all sitting Commissioners.
4. Correspondence & communications, including ARCHIVE REPORT on "Minutes" for canceled meeting of 2/11/14.

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report on various issues.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report on recent correspondence/communications.

3. OLD Business – 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Potential Action Item: Discussion on current status of ANNUAL REPORT Submittals, including potential revisions of the DRAFT Report distributed by Pres. Noetzel, and potential Ratification vote.

4. NEW Business.

- A. Discussion of recent mis-application of Street Artist Vendor Fees law exempting Veterans from such fees. (Comm. Ramirez, Lead).
- B. Discussion on potential new ways to disseminate Agendas & Minutes to reduce paper and mailing costs.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Sitting Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Sitting Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments building construction and/or management.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary or Commission President before the meeting. Contact info follows:
Secretary: Lee BURNETTE: email <SFVACSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM> (cell) 619.888.8987
President: Stephen S. NOETZEL: email <noetzelder@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

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Commissioner Ramirez informed the Commission that the Street Artist Vendor Fees law allows those veterans who have received an honorable discharge to apply for a **waiver of the fees** associated with the application for a Street Artist Vendor permit.

- B. Discussion of potential new ways to disseminate Agendas & Minutes to reduce paper waste and mailing costs.**

Commissioner Baldonado indicated that his email suffers from a virus, and that a mailed hard copy would be preferred. Additionally, although copies may be emailed to commissioners ahead of time, **Sunshine Ordinance mandates** that hard copies **must be provided** at the meeting, for members of the public to review. **All other Commissioners indicated a preference to receive all documents via Email.**

Agenda Item 5. Veteran Related LEGISLATION.

- A. **Commissioner Wong** sent an email, entitled “**VFW Legislative Report,**” which lists the concerns raised by 4 of the largest Veterans Service Organizations (AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.) regarding the President’s proposed budget for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The proposed budget is approximately **\$2.7 billion less than what Veterans groups are suggesting is an appropriate level of funding.**
- B. **Commissioner Weeby** informed the Commission that she will continue her work with **IAVA (Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America)** and the program “**Storm the Hill**” which will take place the week of **March 22 – 28, in Washington, DC.** During that time, members of IAVA will lobby legislators and raise issues pertinent to Veterans. **Commissioner Weeby** participated in the event last year, and found it to be extremely helpful. She will report back to the Commission at next month’s meeting regarding the program.
- B. **Commissioner Dacumos** encouraged all members of the Commission to write their Supervisor about **what steps the Board of Supervisors can take with regard to the issue of homelessness among Veterans.** She informed the Commission that approximately 1 in 4 Veterans in San Francisco is homeless. She suggested that the Commissioners write asking for the **Board of Supervisors to hold Town Hall Meetings on this issue.** She also mentioned that **Supervisor Mark Farrell** is very receptive to Veterans issues and is taking the lead on the BOS regarding the homelessness issue in San Francisco.
- D. **Commissioner Guy** also echoed **Commissioner Dacumos** with regard to Supervisor Farrell’s stance on homelessness in San Francisco.

Agenda Item 6 – War Memorial Veterans Building

Commission President Noetzel provided the Commission with a copy of a letter dated Feb 1, 2014, from Nelson Lum, Chairman of the American Legion War Memorial Commission to the Legion membership, and for public distribution. The letter reviews “important developments” regarding the space allocation for Veterans use of the War Memorial Veterans Building on completion of the retrofit construction (some time in 2015). The most significant of these ‘developments’ is the fact that the ALWMC has now retained a Law Firm (DLA Piper) to register objection to the Space Allocation Plan put forth by the Board of Trust of the War Memorial Buildings. A final attempt to negotiate a fair Space Allocation Veterans use (in the Veterans Building) is now underway.

Agenda Item 7 – Announcements

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page.

Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at:

<http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

- **March 20**, from 6pm-9pm, there will be a **panel at San Jose City Hall**, entitled **“Servicewomen Come Marching Home,”** with Commissioner Guy serving as one of the panel members.
- **March 21**, at 5PM, Intuit will host a **“Vets in Tech”** networking event.
- **March 22**, from noon to 3pm, the **WOMEN VETERANS APPRECIATION DAY ANNUAL LUNCHEON** at 678 Portola, San Francisco. Event is produced by AMVETS. Contact Latonia Dixon at oshun45@gmail.com

[illegible]

- **March 26**, from 9-11 and 3-5, at 450 Golden Gate, in the Arizona Room, the **SF Veterans Town Hall Collaborative** will meet. This is a recurring event, which meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month for the rest of the year. **Commissioner Ramirez** hosts this event, which seeks to bring together Veterans who need assistance, and the Veterans Service Providers who can assist them.
- **April 6th** Starting 5pm at the United Irish Cultural Center, the **CHARTER NIGHT DINNER** event to install officers of the newly formed San Francisco **VETERANS LIONS CLUB** (\$50. Ticket) Contact Latonia Dixon at oshun45@gmail.com

Agenda Item #8 - Honors Report and Moment of Silence:

In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item #9 - AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:25pm

Minutes of the 3/11/14 VAC Meeting written by S. Noetzel and M. Maffei, and UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (after corrections and minor modifications) at the VAC Meeting of 4/8/14

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of March 11, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report: President S. NOETZEL to report on various issues including (but not limited to),
- > Introduction and Welcome of TWO new Commissioners, Recently appointed by the BOS, namely; Comm. Angela JENKINS (appointed to BOS Seat #2, replacing Comm. J. Towers), and Comm. Dwane KENNEDY (appointed to BOS Seat #10, replacing Comm. M. Tramil).
 - > Misc. Correspondence & communications.
 - > Communication difficulties with VAC Secretary

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B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report on (but not limited to), Recap of 3/26 meeting with Nicole Wheaton of Mayor Lee staff.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report on recent correspondence/communications.

3. Commission GOALS and PLANS.

DISCUSSION: Individual Commissioners to submit & discuss potential GOALS for balance of 2014.

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4. OLD Business -- (none outstanding)

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5. NEW Business.

- A. Formulation of 'Work Groups' to do background research on VAC issues.

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6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Sitting Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Sitting Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments building construction and/or management.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

10. AJORNMENT

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - April 8, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - April 8, 2014

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: APRIL 8, 2014

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum (see Roll Call, below), the April Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by President Stephen Noetzel at 6:00pm. Meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners: Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Jenkins, Kennedy, Maffei, Marshall, Noetzel, Ramirez, Smith, Weebey, Wilkerson, Wong (13)

Absent - Excused: Comm. R. Baldonado, illness

Absent UN-EXCUSED: Commissioners L. Burnette, and J. Gallagher

Note: Commission strength currently at 16 members, with one (Mayoral Appointed) Vacancy.

Attending Guests: Dara Wong, Jordan Towers, Nelson Lum.

Note: There was no City Attorney in attendance.

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Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda, as written, made by Comm. Maffei, (2nd, Comm. Guy). After minimal discussion, the meeting AGENDA, was approved by unanimous vote.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of March 11, 2014 (as written by VP Maffei, and President Noetzel), made by Comm. Caldera (2nd Comm. Ramirez).

In discussion, Comm. Caldera raised an issue with regard to text reporting Agenda Item 2, (A3) regarding Ethics Training requirements. Comm. Ramirez suggested a minor text deletion. After some discussion, Minutes authors Noetzel & Maffei agreed to modify the text regarding Ethics Training Requirements as proposed by Commissioners Caldera and Ramirez. A vote was then taken on approval of the Minutes, as modified. It passed, unanimously.

At this point, Comm. Ramirez made a Motion (Second, Comm. Weebey), which would mandate that future publication of the Commission Minutes should not include either bold text, or color text. After some discussion on style and publication preference, the Question was Called. In the ensuing vote, the motion carried, (10 Yea, 2 Abstain, 1 Nay) with Commissioners Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Jenkins, Kennedy, Ramirez, Smith, Weebey, Wilkerson and Wong voting for the style change, Commissioners Maffei and Marshall in abstention, and Comm. Noetzel, against. Future Minutes will be published without the use of bold, (other than Subject Headings), or colors.

Agenda item 1 - Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Former Commissioner Jordan Towers spoke to express his appreciation for the work of the entire Commission, during his tenure, and expressed his hope for a productive future for the Commission.

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report:

(A.1) President Noetzel began his Report with 'Thumbnail' introductions of the TWO newest members of the Commission, Namely, Commissioner A. Jenkins, (an Air Force/Amy Vet who resides in SF District 6), and Commissioner Dwane Kennedy (an Army Vet who resides in SF District 10). After a welcoming round of applause, each of the new (BOS Appointed) Commissioners expressed their gratitude for the Welcome and pledged to add their efforts to those of the Commission.

[A2] Next, President Noetzel raised the issue of his attempts to communicate with the VAC Secretary. Commissioners Ramirez and Maffei agreed to work together to resolve the issue.

B. Vice Presidents Report:

V.P. Maffei reported on a 3/25/14 meeting with Ms. Nicole Wheaton of the Office of Mayor Lee, attended by himself and President Noetzel. Five issues were discussed. First, the topic of reducing the Commission's size was deemed moot, based on the recent appointments to the board. Second, the commissioners discussed possible changes to the ethics training. Third, the commissioners discussed possible negotiation strategies regarding the Veterans War Memorial Building. Fourth, there was a discussion regarding responses to official commission letters to the Board of Supervisors. Finally, there was a discussion on the possibility of the commission holding hearings on a pertinent topic.

C. Secretary's Report:

No report. Secretary absent (illness).

Agenda Item 3 – Commission GOALS and PLANS

President Noetzel started by asking assembled Commissioners if they had formulated any responses to his request for specific GOALS and PLANS suggestions, for the Commission, for the balance of the year.

- Comm. Caldera brought up the subject of "Time and Place" of the VAC meetings, suggesting that the current Commission Roster might have new opinion(s) on when and where we should meet. He also commented on that it is unfortunate and disturbing that there is no City Attorney present at far too many of the General Meetings of the Commission.
- Comm. Kennedy suggested that VAC should submit Advice Letters to City only after issue is fully researched, documented, and submitted: "Legislation Ready".
- Comm. Weeby suggested that the issue of Mental Health in the Veterans Community is critical, and deserving of attention by this Commission.
- Comm. Ramirez, who works in Mental Health and is tasked to do Mental Health Summit meetings, suggested that the VAC should be focal point for all vets in SF – especially in this critical area. He noted a May 12 & 13 event, and Mental Health Summit in August. (See Announcements, Agenda Item #8).
- Comm. Dacumos mentioned new studies that point to Early Onset Dementia now apparent with Vets. When added to PTSD, this is a huge complicator in Mental Health issues. She suggests that if the Commission wants to develop valid advice in this area, we need to actually get into the community, attend Glide Memorial activities, walk the tenderloin, and visit the San Bruno (Jail) Pod.
- Comm. Jenkins spoke of the connection between Mental Health Needs, and Veteran's Court.
- Comm. Ramirez gave background on some of the services of the (new) Veterans Court.
- Comm. Caldera suggested that since the VAC Charter includes provision for Holding Hearings, perhaps the possibility of a future HEARING (possibly in conjunction with the City Dept. of Mental Health), on Mental Health issues within the Veterans Community, might be a valid Commission Goal.

President Noetzel then addressed several potential ways that the Commission might move forward with a number of these excellent Commission Goals. He introduced the idea of the PASSIVE MEETING BODY, (as suggested by Ms. Nicole Wheaton of the Mayor's Office). A Passive Meeting Body is an informal "Issue Research Team" consisting of two commissioners working together to research an issue, which, when fully developed, would then be proposed to the entire board for action.

President Noetzel and VP Maffei pointed out that Ms. Wheaton clearly suggested that the likelihood of a positive reply to submittal of an Advice Letter is directly proportional to the level of Development of the issue, when presented. In further discussion it was generally agreed that a new Advice Letter Strategy should be implemented. The New Strategy would require that future Advice Letters (to Mayor and BOS), should include full research, full development, even suggested draft of legislation to bring to BOS for implementation.

Commissioner Ramirez then added a suggestion for one final Commission Goal; that being the Study and Development of a (new) City Department or 'agency' titled: THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, of the City and County of San Francisco. He suggested that since the City of Los Angeles implemented such an Agency, the issues of Veterans and the Veterans Community (in that City), have become much more 'visible' to City Government, and, as a result, they have become more responsive to "Veterans Community" issues. Comm. Ramirez suggested that if such an 'Agency' were initiated (by Charter Legislation) within San Francisco, it would gain responsibility and oversight of the County Veterans Service Office, and also serve as the "Umbrella Agency" of all manner of Veterans and Veterans community issues and bodies in the City, thereby enabling ultimate implementation of the "One-Stop-Shop" for Veterans Services, that Comm. Ramirez has been advocating for a very long time – within the War Memorial Veterans Building after its re-opening in 2015.

Commissioner Kennedy then made a short presentation about how the current public discussions regarding Private Commuter Transportation Busses (aka: The 'Google Bus Issue') has impact on the Veterans Community. He pointed out that the traditional Free bus Shuttle, for veterans needing transport of the VA Campus at Ft Miley – has somehow (mistakenly) become enveloped in the controversy. He suggested that a clear distinction must be drawn – to separate long established and critical VA related Transportation Services, from the ongoing "Tech Bus" controversy. He suggested that he would be willing to research some potential action for resolution of this unfortunate issue.

Agenda Item 4. OLD Business – (none outstanding)

Agenda Item 5. NEW Business. Formulation of 'Work Groups' to do Research and Development of VAC issues.

- o After full discussion on Commission Goals and Plans (Item 3, above), President Noetzel suggested the formation of a STANDING COMMITTEE, on VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES. He asked Comm. Ramirez to Chair the Committee. After Comm. Ramirez accepted Chairmanship, four additional Commissioners volunteered to participate as Committee Members; those being Commissioners Dacumos, Guy, Smith, and Weebly. The 5-Member Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services will make its initial Report at the next VAC Meeting.
- o On the (new) issue of Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, President Noetzel suggested formation of a Passive Body Research Team, to research how the 'agency' was developed in Los Angeles, and the possibilities of replication in San Francisco. Commissioner Marshall volunteered to serve on such a team, as did Vice President Maffei. They were officially sanctioned as a Passive Body Research Team for that issue, and will Report their progress in future meetings.
- o On the issue of Protection of Veterans Transportation Services President Noetzel appointed Comm. Kennedy as Lead Commissioner to further research this issue, develop suggestions for solution, and report back to the Commission at future meetings.

Agenda Item 6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

- > Comm. Ann Weebly, recounted her week in Washington D.C. lobbying with Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) as part of Storm The Hill. Comm. Weebly started by pointing out that two of her clients were lost to suicide during the past year and that immediate action is required to stem the rate of 22 veteran suicides per day. A bill is currently in the Senate to directly support IAVA's Campaign to Combat Suicide: SAV Act S. 2182 A bill to expand and improve care provided to veterans and members of the Armed Forces with mental health disorders or at risk of suicide, to review the terms or characterization of the discharge or separation of certain individuals from the Armed Forces, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

> President Noetzel then spoke about the need to support CA Prop 41, which will be on the San Francisco June 3, 2014 PRIMARY ELECTION ballot. This important Veterans Housing Initiative has already been passed by the California Legislature and signed by the Governor. Because its purpose is to re-direct use of funds previously authorized in a Bond Initiative, utilization changes must also be authorized by a majority of Statewide voters. Prop 41 re-directs some \$600 million of previously authorized (and unspent) bond funds, to construct and rehabilitate housing and affordable transitional housing, for California's large population of Homeless veterans. Best of all – it does not raise taxes. The President will offer a Commission Resolution, in support of passage of Prop 41, at the next VAC meeting.

Agenda Item 7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Guest Nelson Lum, President of the American Legion War Memorial Commission, provided a history of the major developments in the construction, administration, and historic usage of the WMVB.

Agenda Item 8. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page.

Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

April 23, from 9-11 and 3-5, at 450 Golden Gate, in the Arizona Room, the SF Veterans Town Hall Collaborative will meet. This is a recurring event, which meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month for the rest of the year. Commissioner Ramirez hosts this event, which seeks to bring together Veterans who need assistance, and the Veterans Service Providers who can assist them.

May 12—13, 2014, The Veterans Administration Office of Mental Health Operations (OMHO) will be visiting the S. F. VA Medical Center at Ft. Miley. They seek input on how VA services in Mental Health area are working in our area. To volunteer to be interviewed to relate the experiences of yourself and/or family in this context, contact Interview Coordinator Eduardo Ramirez. **NOTE: Event POSTPONED...To Be RESCHEDULED.**

Monday, May 26, 2014 is the date of the annual MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE EVENT at the Presidio. The "Honor and Remember" proceedings this year will be in commemoration of the 5th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War. Event starts with a Grand March, at 10:30am. Full details available from the San Francisco National Cemetery website, at www.presidio.gov

August 12th, 2014 is the (tentative) date of the Veterans Administration Mental Health Summit (in conjunction with the August Town Hall Collaborative meeting).

Agenda Item 9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item 10. AJORNMENT Meeting adjourned @ 7:58pm

Minutes of the 4/8/14 VAC Meeting written by S. Noetzel and M. Maffei, and approved, as amended, at the VAC Meeting of 5/13/14

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of April 8, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

- A. President's Report; President S. NOETZEL to report on various issues including (but not limited to),
 - > Misc. Correspondence & communications.

B. Vice Presidents Report; Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Burnette to report.

3. OLD Business - Committee Reports

- A. Progress Report from the newly established Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).
- B. Progress Report from the newly established Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).
- C. Progress Report from Comm. B. Kennedy (lead Commissioner) on issue of Protection of Veterans Transportation Services.

4. NEW Business.

- A. Presentation of program: "The Mission Continues" (by Ryan Cahill & Rosie Brown - as introduced by Comm. A. Weeby). Presentation followed by discussion and Potential Vote to support the Mayor's office hosting Mission Continues fellows.
- B. Report by Comm. Weeby: Golden Gate Parks Conservancy builds a trail behind Fort Miley on National Trail's Day. Presentation followed by discussion and Potential Vote to endorse the new Veteran's Trail
- C. Development of SOLDIERS PLAZA at Presidio. Comm. Ramirez, Lead. Discussion and Potential Action.
- D. Advocacy in support of CA Prop 41, on the 6/12/14 Ballot. Pres. Noetzel to submit Resolution in Support, for discussion and Potential Action to adopt.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments building construction and/or management.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify the Commission Secretary or Commission President before the meeting. Contact info follows:
Secretary: Lee BURNETTE: email <SFVACSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM> (cell) 619.888.8987
President: Stephen S. NOETZEL: email <noetzelder@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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For information on your rights under the Sunshine ordinance (Chapter 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code), or to report a violation of the ordinance, please contact: Mr. Chris RUSTON, Administrator, Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, at telephone # 415-554-7724.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

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To close out this Report, Commissioners Ramirez and Guy invited all to visit a "gathering" tonight - of veterans interested in working together on the Mental Health Care issues of Veterans and families, at the Golden Gate Tap Room (2525 Sutter St. @ Powell).

B. REPORT from Research team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Commissioners Maffei and Marshall provided a report that included use of Visual Media Presentation of the Website of the existing Los Angeles County Department of Veterans Affairs. They have taken the initiative to contact Ms. Stephanie Stone, Director of Los Angeles County Department of Veterans Affairs, and are planning a tele-conference (in the near future) to gain advice and information on the L.A. Agency as a potential 'model' for creation of a similar City Department in San Francisco. The website depicted showed how the LA Department serves as a kind of 'Umbrella Agency' to facilitate joint-participation of a host of Veteran-related agencies and services - including areas such as Military Records, Housing, Employment, Health Services, etc. To close out this Report, Commissioners Maffei and Marshall assured the Commission that their research into the potential of Establishment of a new San Francisco Department of Veterans Affairs would continue and that they will report further progress in future VAC meetings.

C. REPORT on issue of Protection of Veterans Transportation. Lead Commissioner Kennedy provided full background on an unfortunate situation whereby busses operating in San Francisco - on contract to the VA - to transport veterans, and VA employees/volunteers to and from various VA facilities in the city, are now being "caught-up" in the protests, demonstrations, and harassment of similar charter busses transporting "high-tech" employees to and from their jobs. Comm. Kennedy has prepared an Information Packet, which depicts the situation in photos and other media/news reports. The packet includes a 2-part Recommendation for Action that he would like the Commission to support. President Noetzel asked that this issue be included on Agenda for the June VAC meeting as an Action Item, and VP Maffei (who will preside at that meeting) agreed to work with Comm. Kennedy on creation of a formal Letter or Resolution (on this matter) for adoption at the June VAC meeting.

Agenda Item 4. NEW Business.

A. Presentation of the Program "The Mission Continues" (Potential Action Item on Agenda). Commissioner Weebly reported that guests Ryan Cahill and Rosie Brown, were unable to appear this evening to make their planned presentation so she proceeded with an Overview of "The Mission Continues", explaining that the program started in 2007 by a Navy Vet who sought to find ways to "Continue the Mission" by offering Service to Community on his return to civilian life. The program is set up as a certified Non-Profit and features a 6-month Community Fellowship program whereby Veterans provide specific public-service "missions". Comm. Weebly reports that one such Mission includes a concept to have up to five (5) qualified veterans work as interns in various offices of the City Hall of San Francisco. After some very positive discussion on the program potential, Comm. Weebly offered a MOTION seeking formal VAC support for this program (2nd by Comm. Gallagher). The MOTION included VAC support and advocacy for the Mayor to find service positions for up to five 'Fellows' to work in City Hall under the 6-month Mission Continues program. A vote was taken and the Motion passed unanimously. Comm. Weebly will follow up by writing an Advice Letter (regarding Commission advocacy for the program) for signature by Acting President Maffei as soon as is practicable.

B. Concept of a "VETERANS TRAIL" proposed for development at Ft. Miles (Potential Action Item on Agenda). Commissioner Weebey reported that the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy is considering development of a new hiking trail on the outskirts of Ft. Miles - to be formally presented on National Trail Day (6/7/14), as the VETERANS TRAIL. The new hiking trail would essentially connect the Ft Miles VA facility, to the nearby Legion of Honor. It would be constructed under ADA standards via volunteer labor, including, hopefully, a high percentage of volunteer work by area veterans. After supportive discussion Comm. Weebey offered a MOTION (2nd, Comm. Guy) to "Endorse and partner with the GG Nat'l Parks Conservancy in advocacy for development of the subject VETERANS TRAIL". A vote was taken and the Motion passed unanimously. Comm. Weebey will follow up by writing an Advice Letter (regarding Commission advocacy for the program) for signature by Acting President Maffei as soon as is practicable.

C. Development of a SOLDIERS PLAZA in the Presidio of San Francisco. (Potential Action Item on Agenda).
 Note: Though on the Agenda for Potential Action, this item was inadvertently and unfortunately overlooked by President Noetzel during the proceedings. It was brought up again at the end of the meeting by Lead Commissioner Ramirez. President Noetzel offered to go back to the item for presentation by Comm. Ramirez, but he declined, stating that he would just as soon bring it up again as an Agenda item for the June meeting. He promised to forward to Commissioners, an Email which would provide full background information on the proposed Soldiers Plaza, in the Presidio.

D. Commission Advocacy for passage of Proposition 41 on the June 2014 ballot. (Potential Action Item on Agenda).
 President Noetzel opened this item by distributing and reading aloud a draft Resolution that he had written on the subject. It included 5 background 'whereas' statements that reviewed the background of Prop 41, and ended with a resolution (that):
 "...the Commission advises all patriotic San Franciscans to cast their ballot in support of this important measure, as passage of Proposition 41 will result in construction of affordable, supportive, and transitional housing for homeless and near-homeless California Veterans – without raising taxes." To initiate discussion on the matter, Comm. Kennedy offered a MOTION to adopt the Resolution and forward it, with cover letter, to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors. (2nd by Comm. Maffei).

[illegible]

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of May 13, 2014 Page 3 of 3

A. *Agenda Item 4 - New Business: Resolution on Prop 41 - CONTINUED....)*

In discussion, Comm. Ramirez asked City Attorney Snodgrass if there was not an established process for Commissions to advocate for passage of legislation. Attorney Snodgrass stated that there well might be such a process, but Commissions had every right to

pass Resolutions that advocate passage of any legislation or ballot Proposition, that might further the mission and ideals of said Commission.

President Noetzel also addressed the Ramirez objection by pointing out that this was not a Resolution in support of legislation, as the State Legislature had already passed legislation in favor of this measure, but it was now before the electorate because voter approval of re-allocation of funds approved by ballot must also be passed by majority vote. Finally, Pres. Noetzel pointed out that the election was only weeks away, and submittal via the Legislature Advocacy process would take far too long.

In further discussion several minor changes to improve the text and style of the Noetzel Draft Resolution were offered by Commissioners Maffei and Kennedy and Burnette. These were all gratefully accepted by Resolution author Noetzel, and eventually the Question was called and a vote was taken. The motion passed with all yea votes, no nays, and Comm. Ramirez abstaining. President Noetzel will forward the Resolution, as modified, with Transmittal Letter, to all appropriate addressees.

Agenda Item 5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

President Noetzel invited Commissioners to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans related Legislation. There were no Reports or comments in this area.

Agenda Item 6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

President Noetzel invited Commissioners to Report on report on new developments in space allocation and/or construction issues with respect to the W.M. Veterans Building. There were no Reports or comments in this area.

Agenda Item 7. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Note: Many of the announcements cited below have further information and details on the VAC Facebook page.

Click Facebook icon (and Twitter icon) on the homepage, of the SFVA website, at: <http://sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1688>

Numerous announcements were made by various Commissioners regarding events of potential interest to Veterans, happening within the next four weeks. President Noetzel encouraged all those making such announcements to discuss them with Comm. Marshall and/or Guy, to get them on the Social Media pages of the SFVAC website. There were no announcements of events for dates beyond the publication date of these Minutes.

Agenda Item 8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

Agenda Item 9. AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned @ 7:58pm

Minutes of the 5/13/14 VAC Meeting written by S. Noetzel, and Approved, by unanimous vote at the S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission General Meeting of August 12, 2014

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014 - Meeting Agenda

Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051
San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, June 10, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

Vice-President Michael Maffei, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of May 13, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment: (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: No Report. President Noetzel traveling.

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report.

3. OLD Business - Committee Reports

A. Report from Comm. B. Kennedy (lead Commissioner) on issue of Protection of Veterans Transportation Services. **Discussion and Potential Action on proposal(s) submitted.**

B. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).

C. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

4. NEW Business.

A. Discussion and Research into issue of proliferation of "Bad Paper" Discharges, and potential for establishment of new Review Process. Comm. Maffei, Lead.

B. Development of SOLDIERS PLAZA at Presidio. Comm. Ramirez, Lead. **Discussion and Potential Action.**

C. Discussion of recent mental health issues related to the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. Comm. Dacumos, Lead.

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014 - Meeting Agenda

Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051
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Tuesday, June 10, 2014, 6:00pm

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2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: No Report. President Noetzel traveling.

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report.

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6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments building construction and/or management.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

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Secretary: Lee BURNETTE: email <SFVACSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM> (cell) 619.888.8987

President: Stephen S. NOETZEL: email <noetzelder@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - June 10, 2014

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: June 10, 2014

MEETING CANCELLED – NO Call to Order

At Approximately 6:20pm, Vice President Michael Maffei (who was scheduled to preside), recognized that *appropriate Public Notice (for the meeting) had not been posted as required by law. He then officially CANCELED the meeting and dismissed with apology, all who attended.*

Official Meeting Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: (10)

Commissioners: Baldonado, Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Maffei, Ramirez, Smith, Weeby, Wilkerson, and Wong

Absent – Excused (4):

Comm. Jenkins (Personal)

Comm. Kennedy (Personal)

Comm. Marshall (Personal)

Comm. Noetzel (Travel)

Absent – Un-Notified (2)

Comm. Burnette

Comm. Gallagher

Note 1: Commission strength currently at 16 members, with one (Mayoral Appointed) Vacancy.

Note 2: This 'Cancelled Meeting Notice' written (in lieu of Meeting Minutes),

by VAC President, Stephen S. Noetzel

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, August 12, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of May 13, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Noetzel to report: "Where we are" also (new) Mayor's Policy on Commissioner Attendance.

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report.

3. NEW Business.

A. DISCIPLINARY ACTION ITEM. Discussion and Potential Action to review and resolve situation of **malfeasance and Failure to Perform Job Duties by Commission Secretary**; including potential appointment of Temporary Acting Secretary.

B. Discussion and Research into issue of proliferation of "Bad Paper" Discharges, and potential for establishment of new Review Process. Comm. Maffei, Lead.

C. Development of **SOLDIERS PLAZA** at Presidio. Comm. Ramirez, Lead. **Discussion and Potential Action.**

4. OLD Business - Committee Reports

A. Report from Comm. B. Kennedy (lead Commissioner) on issue of Protection of Veterans Transportation Services. **Discussion and Potential Action on proposal(s) submitted.**

B. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).

C. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Guest Paul Cox (a member of the American Legion War Memorial Commission Legal Action Team) will report on status of potential Legal Action to secure appropriate Space Allocation for Veterans and Veterans Services in building after retrofit.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify Commission President S. Noetzel prior to the meeting. Email <noetzel@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

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wheelchair accessible as are nearby city bus lines and stops. For more Public Transit information services, call 415-923-6142.



7. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Guy announced that she is collecting gently used clothing and accessories until August 22nd for a conference on August 24-26th. Commissioner Caldera asked if Fleet Week and the Veterans Parade was happening this month and if these events could be placed on the next agenda. Commissioner Ramirez announced that War Memorial Building dedication coincides with the Veterans Day Parade. Commissioner Weeby announced that a woman's hack-a-thon is scheduled for August 25th and sponsored by Vets in Tech. A swim from Alcatraz is scheduled for September 28th and Commissioner Weeby can be contacted for additional information. Mr. Adams announced that there are upcoming events that will be posted on Homeless Connect..

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

*Minutes of the 8/12/14 VAC Meeting written by S. Noetzel, and D. Kennedy and approved, unanimously
At the VAC General Meeting of 9/9/14.*



VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, September 9, 2014, 6:00pm
MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA
President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of August 12, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Noetzel to report: "Where we are"

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Burnette to report (if applicable)

3. NEW Business.

- A. Port Chicago National Memorial Project. Presentation by lead Comm. Jenkins and guest, Rev. McDaniel of Friends of Port Chicago. Discussion of plan for future action by Commission.
- B. Veterans Court of San Francisco. Presentation by lead Comm. Maffei and guest, Judge Braden Woods of S.F. Veterans Court. Discussion of plan for future action by Commission
- C. Invitation for Secretary L. Burnette to address Commission to explain why he should not be removed as VAC Secretary, followed by Potential Action to Rescind Motion to Remove as taken during meeting of 8/12/14.
- D. Implementation of 8/12/14 Commission decision on Removal of Comm. Burnette as Commission Secretary.
Note: Action Item only if Comm. Burnette fails to succeed in reinstatement (See item 'C' above)
- E. Action Item. Discussion and potential appointment of new Acting Secretary for balance of 2014.

4. OLD Business - Committee Reports

- A. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).
- B. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments regarding WMVB.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify
Commission President S. Noetzel prior to the meeting. Email <noetzelder@gmail.com>
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[illegible]

C. Invitation for Secretary Burnette to address Commission. Note: Comm. Burnette was again Absent Without Notice.

D. Formal Removal of Comm. Burnette as Commission Secretary.
No further action required as Comm. Burnette was absent. Formal Removal of previous meeting stands.

E. Discussion and appointment of new Commission Secretary.

President Noetzel spoke of the need for a Commission Secretary, to replace former Secretary Burnette, for the remainder of 2014. He reported that Commissioner DWANE KENNEDY had filled in admirably (without title) and performed much of the work of Commission Secretary over the past two months. He suggested that the Commission might want to APPOINT Commissioner Kennedy, as Acting Secretary for the remainder of the Administration Year.

Comm. Caldera suggested that after 9 months of uncertainty in the position of Secretary, the Commission would be better served via appointment of a fully recognized Secretary. Comm. Caldera then made a MOTION to appoint and affirm Commissioner Dwane Kennedy as Commission Secretary for the remainder of 2014. (2nd Comm. Maffei). After some discussion the question was called and a vote taken on the Motion. All Commissioners - save one (Comm. Ramirez: Abstain) voted for the appointment. Commissioner Kennedy closed the matter by thanking the Commission for their vote of confidence.

Agenda item 4. OLD Business - Committee Reports

Commissioner Ramirez described activities and attendance at the recent Mental Health Summit. Commissioner Dacumos added information about the continued homelessness outreach.

Commissioner Marshall provided an updated on the effort to create a new City Department dedicated to Veterans Affairs. Recent communications with the City of Los Angeles had been useful to identify best practices and lessons learned.

Agenda item 5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioner Dong described the status AB 935 to provide veterans designation on a California Drivers License and asked Commissioners to contact Governor Brown an encourage him to sign AB 935.

Agenda item 6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Legal research continues on the existing lawsuit. The opening date for the building is scheduled for August 2015. Future meetings will need to discuss the long term location of the VAC. Commissioners expressed interest a walk-through of the building.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Caldera described a recent event that he attended regarding the use of reclamation funds related to the Vietnam War including munitions removal and repairs to airports. President Noetzel provided additional information on the event and asked if others were interested in the issue.

Commissioner Marshall announced two upcoming events 1) Veterans Start-up School 2) IRAP fundraiser on October 10th

Commissioner Ramirez announced October 10th at 3:00 is the War Memorial Dedication

Commissioner Guy announced Eastbay Stand-down is scheduled for September 11-14th at the Pleasanton Fairgrounds. The Alcatraz Swim starts at 7:00 a.m. on September 28th at Aquatic Park.

Commissioner Caldera noted that employees of Twitter are being threatened by ISIS.

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community.

9. AJORNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Minutes of the 9/9/14 VAC Meeting written by Secretary Dwane Kennedy and approved unanimously (with minor corrections) at VAC meeting of 10/14/14.

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VETERNS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco
City Hall #1 Goodlet Place, Room 051
San Francisco, CA 94102

10-10-14A11:06 RCVD

MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, October 14, 2014, 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA
President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of September 10, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Noetzel to report. ELECTIONS start in November.
Comm. Dacumos Recap of 9/27 "ReEntry Fair.

B. Vice Presidents Report; Vice President Michael MAFFEI to report.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Dwane Kennedy to report.

3. NEW Business.

- A. Discussion and possible ACTION to adopt Resolution regarding Relocation of the S.F. Vietnam Veterans Memorial, to the Veteran's building. (as Submitted by Comm. Noetzel and ALWMC).
- B. Discussion and possible ACTION to adopt Resolution regarding Exoneration of the Port Chicago Sailors (as Submitted by Comm. Jenkins)
- C. Discussion of San Francisco Human Resources Commission Implicit Bias Training with potential application to SF VAC (Lead: Comm Jenkins).

4. OLD Business - Committee Reports

- A. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).
- B. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners Invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments regarding WMVB.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community – including the recent suicide of JACOB GEORGE, a 3-tour Afghanistan War veteran and friend of the San Francisco Veteran's Community.

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify Commission President S. Noetzel prior to the meeting. Email <noetzelder@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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APPROVED MINUTES
Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting
Oct. 14, 2014

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Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum (see Roll Call, below), the October Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by President Stephen Noetzel at 6:25pm. Meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: Commissioners: Caldera, Dacumos, Gallagher, Guy, Jenkins, Marshall, Noetzel, Weeby, Wilkerson, Wong (10)

Absent: Excused (4) Comm. R. Baldonado (Illness), Comm. D. Kennedy (Schedule Conflict), Comm. M. Maffei (Illness), Comm. E. Ramirez (Schedule Conflict).

Absent: Un-Excused (2) Commissioner L. Burnette, Commissioner B. Smith

Attending Guests: ALWMC Commissioner Wallace Levin.

City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass was also present.

Note: Commission strength currently at 16 members, with one (Mayoral Appointed) Vacancy.

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda was made by made by Comm. Wong 2nd, Comm. Jenkins. After minor discussion, the Agenda was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY, as written.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of September 9, 2014 (as written by Comm. Kennedy), made by Comm. Jenkins, (2nd Comm. Marshall). After some discussion and minor corrections, a vote was taken and the subject Minutes were unanimously approved.

Agenda item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Guest (ALWMC Commissioner) Wallace Levin provided an update on the VETERANS DAY PARADE scheduled for Sunday the 9th of November, 2014. He informed the Commission that after many years of organizing the Parade along the traditional Market Street Route, an attempt was made to relocate the parade to a new route through North Beach. Unfortunately this planning effort faltered as North Beach merchants felt that the parade might inhibit commerce. Therefore the Parade will once again move along the traditional Market Street Route - from 2nd Street to City Hall park, starting at 11am on Sunday, 11/9. He distributed parade posters and asked Commissioners to help promote the parade, and to volunteer for Parade Marshal duties on Parade Day.

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report:

President Noetzel began his Report by reminding all that the November Meeting of the SFVAC has been RESCHEDULED to WEDNESDAY, the 12th of November, as our regular "second Tuesday" meeting date is Veterans Day, and City Hall is closed for that Holiday. Commissioners were also reminded that as per our Bylaws, NOMINATIONS for Officers for the 2015 Administrative Year will start at the NOVEMBER 12th meeting.

B. Vice Presidents Report;

V.P. Maffei was absent: No Report.

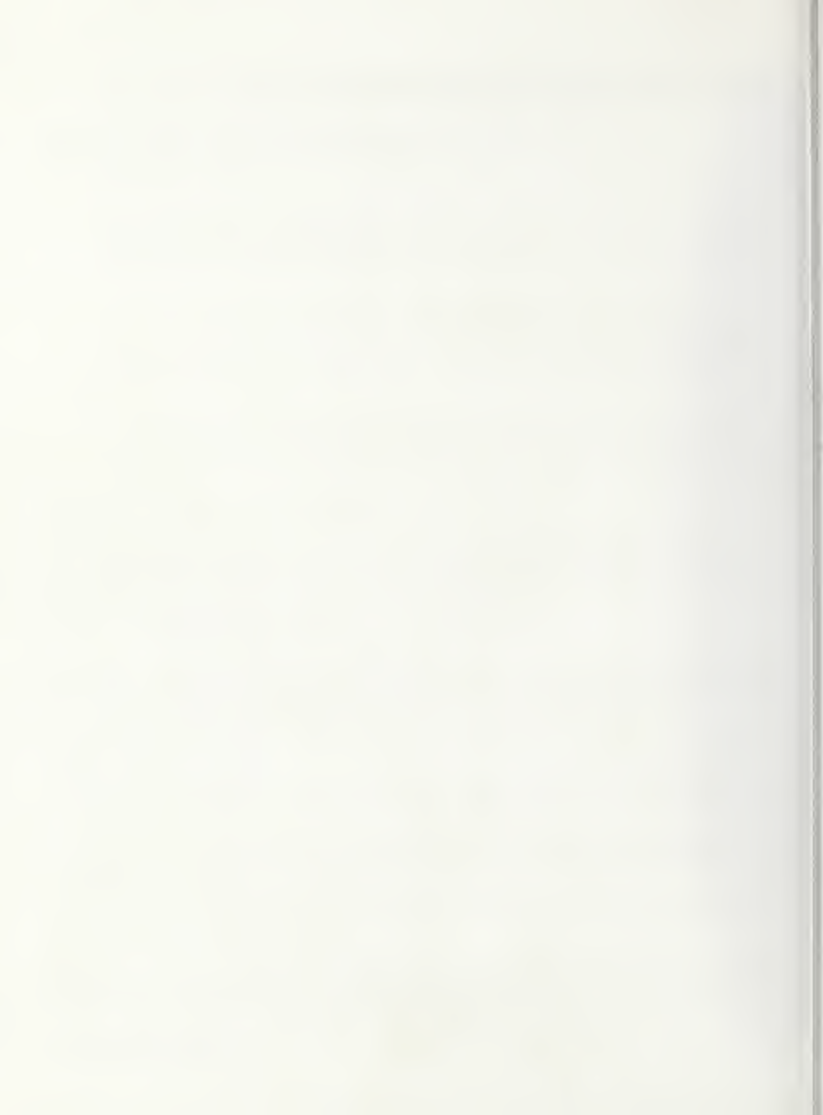
C. Secretary's Report;

Secretary Kennedy was absent: No Report.

Agenda Item 3. NEW Business

- A.** Discussion and ACTION to adopt Resolution regarding Relocation of the S.F. Vietnam Veterans Memorial, to the Veteran's building. President Noetzel initiated discussion on this item by distributing copies of a RESOLUTION passed by the American Legion War Memorial Commission in their meeting of 7 October, 2014. After some context information regarding the importance of the official City of San Francisco Memorial Monument that honors the memory of the 163 San Franciscans that perished in that war, the Resolution goes on to describe the poor condition of the bronze plaque, at its current inconspicuous location at the foot of Market Street. It concludes that in its current location and condition, the Memorial does not receive the recognition and reverence that it deserves, and finally, it supports the renovation of the memorial, and its RELOCATION into a 'place of conspicuous honor' in the foyer of the War Memorial Veterans Building. After some discussion and viewing of several photographs that indicate the current condition of disrepair of the Monuments, a MOTION was made by Comm. Marshall (2nd, Comm. Guy) stating that the SFVAC fully supports the ALWMC Resolution. After minimal further discussion the question was called and a vote taken. The MOTION to SUPPORT the ALWMC Resolution passed unanimously.

*Minutes of the 10/14/14 VAC Meeting written by Secretary Dwane Kennedy,
and Approved, unanimously, at VAC Meeting of 11/12/14*



VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

WEDNESDAY, November 12, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA
President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

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- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of October 14, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report: President Noetzel to report on status of Resolution on Relocation of the S.F. Vietnam Veterans Memorial and other issues.

B. Vice Presidents Report: Vice President Michael Maffei to report.

C. Secretary's Report: Sec'y Dwane Kennedy to report.

3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2014 Term.

- A. Secretary to distribute copies of portions of the Bylaws, which pertain to, and describe the Duties and Responsibilities of each of the 3 Officer Positions that constitute the Executive Board.
- B. President to open floor for NOMINATIONS, for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, in accordance with established Bylaws. Secretary to Record all Nominations.

4. NEW Business.

- A. Discussion and formulation of Plan of Action regarding Best Path Forward to adopt Resolution regarding Exoneration of the Port Chicago Sailors (Lead: Comm. Jenkins)
- B. Site Visit Schedule. Selection (by lot) of Commission Members to observe construction progress at WMB.

4. OLD Business - Committee Reports

- A. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).
- B. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

5. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

6. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments regarding WMVB.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

8. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community

9. AJORNMENT

Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify Commission President S. Noetzel prior to the meeting. Email <noetzel@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - November 12, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - November 12, 2014

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: Nov. 12, 2014

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum (see Roll Call, below), the November Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by President Stephen Noetzel at 6:12pm. Meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: (10) Commissioners: Caldera, Gallagher, Jenkins, Kennedy, Maffei, Marshall, Noetzel, Ramirez, Wong.

Absent: Excused (5) Comm. R. Baldonado (Illness), Comm. D. Dacumos (Illness), Comm. D. Guy (Schedule Conflict) Comm. B. Smith (Illness), Comm. A. Weebly (Schedule Conflict).

Absent: Un-Excused (2) Commissioner L. Burnette, Commissioner E. Wilkerson

City Attorney Wayne Snodgrass was also present.

Note: Commission strength currently at 16 members, with one (Mayoral Appointed) Vacancy.

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda was made by made by Comm. Wong 2nd, Comm. Jenkins. After minor discussion, the Agenda was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY, as written.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of October 14, 2014 (as written by Comm. Kennedy), made by Comm. Jenkins, (2nd Comm. Marshall). After some discussion, a vote was taken and the subject Minutes were unanimously approved.

Agenda item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment.

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report.

President Noetzel provided an update on further progress of the Resolution (passed last month by the VAC) on the *Relocation of the S.F. Vietnam Veterans Memorial, to the Veteran's building*. He advised that the VAC Resolution was combined with the original American Legion War Memorial Commission Resolution as part of an October 22, 2014 LETTER, from ALWMC Chair Paul Cox, to General Myatt and the S.F. Board of Trust, in formal request that the subject Memorial Plaque be relocated to a place of honor within the War Memorial Veterans Building.

B. Vice Presidents Report:

V.P. Maffei reported that he is almost finished writing the ANNUAL REPORT and will submit his draft for consideration by the Commission on time, at the January VAC Meeting.

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C. Secretary's Report:

Secretary Kennedy – nothing to report.

Agenda Item 3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2015 Term.

A. President Noetzel distributed copies of the current Commission By-Laws, making particular reference to Articles that provide a listing of the PRIMARY DUTIES of each elected officer. He reminded Commissioners that when they make NOMINATIONS to the various offices, they should verify beforehand that the potential nominee is aware of the Duties of the Office, and is WILLING to execute such duties, if elected.

B. President Noetzel then moved to the Nominating Process to for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, Indicating that in accordance with the Bylaws, in addition to the current (November) meeting, NOMINATIONS for all positions will again be opened during the DECEMBER meeting, and AGAIN, for the third time, just prior to the VOTE, in the JANUARY MEETING.

Pres. Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Secretary*. Comm. Wikerson nominated current Secretary, Comm. Dwane KENNEDY for Secretary. He accepted the nomination. After two additional unanswered calls for further nominations for Secretary, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

Pres. Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Vice President*. Comm. Ramirez nominated Comm. Jeff MARSHALL for Vice President. He accepted the nomination. In a second call, Comm. Wong nominated current VP Comm. Michael MAFFEI for VP. He also accepted the nomination. After an additional unanswered calls for further nominations for Vice President, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

Pres. Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission President*. Comm. Kennedy nominated current President, Comm. Stephen NOETZEL for President. He accepted the nomination. After two additional unanswered calls for further nominations for President, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

Continuation of Agenda Item 3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2015 Term.

To Review The *current list* of accepted nominations for the 2015 term include:

- For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. D. KENNEDY
- For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. J. MARSHALL and Comm. M. MAFFEI
- For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL

Agenda Item 4. NEW Business.

A. Port Chicago Sailors Exoneration Efforts

Comm. Jenkins Discussion and formulation of Plan of Action regarding Best Path Forward to adopt a resolution regarding exoneration of the Port Chicago Sailors. Commissioner Jenkins advised the Commission that more information would be provided at future meetings.

B. Site Visit Schedule

President Noetzel announced that a tour of the Veterans Memorial Building was scheduled for December 9th at 3:00 p.m. Since the tour group was limited to 7, President Noetzel asked for volunteers to attend the tour. The following Commissioners volunteered to attend the tour: Kennedy, Gallagher, Noetzel, Caldera, Ramirez, Wilkerson and Wong. President Noetzel advised Commissioners that he would follow up with details in a forthcoming E-mail.

Agenda Item 5. OLD Business - Committee Reports

A. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair). Commissioner Ramirez

provided a brief update on Mental Health Services and the continuation of the Veterans Town Hall event being held each month at the Federal Building.

B. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Commissioner Marshall updated the Commission that information gather from similar jurisdictions was ongoing.

Agenda Item 6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioner Wong announced the passage of AB-531 that would allow for a Veteran's Designation on California Drivers Licenses – beginning in January of 2015. Commissioner Wong will provide additional details as the legislation is implemented.

Agenda Item 7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

President Noetzel announced that litigation efforts were ongoing.

Agenda Item 8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Several Veteran related events were announced by Commissioners for the month of November and early December. Description of events and event details will be posted on the Social Media Pages of the VAC Website.

Agenda Item 9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community, and specifically, on this sad day, the passing of Iraq War Veteran and Peace Activist THOMAS YOUNG, who died of his paralyzing wounds yesterday, at age 34.

Agenda Item 10. AJORNMENT

(At 7:18pm)

Minutes of the 11/12/14 VAC Meeting written by Secretary Dwane Kennedy, and unanimously approved

(with minor corrections) et the VAC meeting of December 9, 2014

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

City & County of San Francisco

Mailing Address: S.F. Veterans Affairs Commission, City Hall #1 Goodlett Place, Room 051, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, December 9, 2014, 6:00pm

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting LOCATION: Room 416, City Hall, San Francisco, CA

President Stephen S. Noetzel, Presiding

- > Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- > ROLL CALL (Please Sign-In on Attendance Sheet)
- > REVIEW of Current Meeting AGENDA for approval (Action Item)
- > REVIEW of Draft Meeting MINUTES for VAC Meeting of November 12, 2014 for changes and/or Approval (Action Item)

1. Call for Public Comment. (Time reserved for introduction of guests and general comments by guests).

2. Officers REPORTS:

A. President's Report; President Noetzel to report on misc. issues.

B. Vice Presidents Report; Vice President Michael Maffei to report.

C. Secretary's Report; Sec'y Dwane Kennedy to report.

3. Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2015 Term (Round 2 of 3).

A. Secretary to REVIEW Nominations to date:

- > For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. D. KENNEDY
- > For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. M. MAFFEI and Comm. J. MARSHALL
- > For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL

B. President to re-open floor for NOMINATIONS, for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, in accordance with current Bylaws. Secretary to Record all Nominations.

4. NEW Business.

A. Site Visit Report: Commissioners who participated in recent tour of construction progress at the War Memorial Veterans Building to report on their observations.

5. OLD Business - Committee Reports

A. Progress Report from Committee on Veterans Mental Health Services (Comm. Ramirez, Chair).

B. Progress Report from Research Team on Development of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. (Commissioners Marshall and Maffei).

C. Progress Report on Plan of Action regarding Exoneration of the Port Chicago Sailors (Lead: Comm. Jenkins)

6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments in the area of Veterans Legislation.

7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

Commissioners invited to Report on report on new developments regarding WMVB.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Floor opened for short announcements of veteran related events and/or activities

9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community

10. AJORNMENT

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Note: Commissioners who are unable to attend this meeting are asked to notify Commission President S. Noetzel prior to the meeting. Email <noetzel@gmail.com> (Cell) 415.378.8214

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VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETINGS

General Meetings of the VAC are scheduled for 6:00pm (on) the SECOND TUESDAY of every month, (with rare exception), and are generally held in ROOM 416 in CITY HALL

MEETING CONFIRMATION, and Specific Announcement of General Meetings are made via public Posting of MEETING AGENDAS as required by law, some 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for Commission Meetings (and archive of Meeting Minutes) are available on the VAC Pages of the City of San Francisco WEBSITE, and are also available for Public View and inspection at the (5th Floor) Government Information Center of the San Francisco (Main) Public Library, at 100 Larkin St., San Francisco 94102. (Documents Librarian Telephone 415-557-4472)

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Veterans' Affairs Commission - December 9, 2014 - Meeting Minutes

Veterans' Affairs Commission - December 9, 2014

Minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting: Dec. 9, 2014

Call to Order

Having achieved a Quorum (see Roll Call, below), the November Meeting (of the SFVAC) was called to order (in City Hall Hearing Room #416) by President Stephen Noetzel at 6:00pm. Meeting started with the traditional Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

In Attendance for the Meeting: (11) Commissioners: Baldonado, Caldera, Dacumos, Guy, Jenkins, Kennedy, Maffei, Marshall, Noetzel, Wilkerson and Wong.

Absent: Excused (4) Comm. Comm. J. Gallagher, (Schedule Conflict), Comm. B. Smith (Illness), Comm. E. Ramirez (Schedule Conflict), Comm. A. Weeby (Schedule Conflict).

Absent: Un-Excused (1) Commissioner L. Burnette

City Attorney was not present. Note: Commission strength currently at 16 members, with one (Mayoral Appointed) Vacancy.

Approval of AGENDA

Motion to accept Agenda was made by made by Comm. Maffei (2nd, Comm. Wilkerson). After minor discussion, the Agenda was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY, as written.

Review of Minutes of Previous VAC meeting.

Motion to Approve draft of Minutes for VAC meeting of November 12, 2014 (as written by Comm. Kennedy), made by Comm. Baldonado (2nd Comm. Caldera). After some discussion, a vote was taken and the subject Minutes were unanimously approved.

Agenda item 1 – Call for PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Jenkins reported that she recently attended a presentation at San Francisco State University regarding the "Prison Industrial Complex". Commissioner Dacumos announced that attended the "Brain War Conference" at the Marines Memorial. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs attended the conference and Commissioner Dacumos advised the Secretary that more needs to be done to address moral injuries suffered by Veterans.

Agenda item 2 - Officers Reports

A. President's Report

President Noetzel reported on an important meeting on the 5th of December, when he and American Legion War Memorial Commission Chairman Paul Cox), met with S.F. Supervisor

Mark FARRELL in his office. Meeting began with a presentation of our efforts (to date) to Relocate the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (plaque) from current location in Justin Herman Plaza, to Lobby of War Memorial Veterans Building. We gave Supervisor Farrell an oral background of this issue, and present 3 documents. Including:

o A copy of 10/7/14 ALWMC Resolution requesting Relocation of Memorial.

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- A copy of SFVAC Minor Resolution of 10/14/14 requesting Relocation of Memorial, and
- A copy of 10/22/14 Letter to BOT (from Paul Cox) requesting Relocation of Memorial.

Supv. Farrell expresses great interest in this issue. He will have his staff initiate research to determine exactly which City Agency "owns" the Plaque, or takes responsibility for it.

President Noetzel and Chairman Cox then provided (to Supv. Farrell) a General outline of our struggle to retain adequate space allocation for Veterans Organizations and Activities after remodel and building reopening in fall of 2015. The Supervisor was very interested in the issue and requested more background details. On 12/8/14 Chairman Cox wrote a FOLLOW UP EMAIL to inform Supv. Farrell of some of the elements pertinent to the ongoing struggle that the Veterans Community...is having with the Board of Trust, over Retention of adequate SPACE for Veterans and Veterans activities, in the (remodeled) WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING.

B. Vice Presidents Report:

V.P. Maffei reported that he is almost finished writing the ANNUAL REPORT and will submit his draft for consideration by the Commission on time, at the January VAC Meeting.

C. Secretary's Report:

Secretary Kennedy presented Commissioners with a book written by Starbucks CEO Howard Shultz. The book is a collection of stories depicting Veterans contribution to citizenship, heroism and sacrifice. Proceeds from the sales of the book are being donated to the Onward Veteran Fund. Secretary Kennedy encouraged Commissioners to read the book and pass it along with the coffee gift card to any veteran in need.

Agenda Item 3. Final Opened NOMINATIONS for VAC Officers for 2015 Term.

A. President Noetzel opened the Nominating Process to for each of the 3 Officer Positions of the SFVAC, Indicating that in accordance with the Bylaws, this Nominating Session will be the final opportunity for formal nominations as the VOTE for 2015 officers will be held, after "Campaign Speeches" at the JANUARY VAC MEETING.

Pres. Noetzel asked Secretary Kennedy to Review nominations already in place. The Secretary reported, as follows:

- Earlier nominated for the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. D. KENNEDY
- Earlier nominated for the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. J. MARSHALL and Comm. M. MAFFEI
- Earlier nominated for the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL

B. President Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Secretary*. After three unanswered calls for further nominations for Secretary, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

Pres. Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission Vice President*. After three unanswered calls for further nominations for Secretary, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

Pres. Noetzel then opened the floor for *Nominations for the Office of Commission President*. Comm. Guy nominated

Commissioner Angela JENKINS. She accepted the nomination. After two additional unanswered calls for further nominations

for President, Pres. Noetzel closed nominations for that position.

To Review: The current list of accepted nominations for the 2015 term include:

- For the Office of VAC SECRETARY: Comm. D. KENNEDY
- For the Office of VAC VICE PRESIDENT: Comm. J. MARSHALL and Comm. M. MAFFEI
- For the Office of VAC PRESIDENT: Comm. S. NOETZEL, and Comm. A. JENKINS

Agenda Item 4. NEW Business.

A. Site Visit Report: Commissioners who participated in the December 9 Site Tour of construction progress at the War Memorial Veterans Building reported on their observations during the 75-minute tour. Attendees included Commissioners Kennedy, Noetzel, Caldera, Ramirez, Wilkerson and Wong.

Agenda Item 5. OLD Business - Committee Reports

A. Veterans Committee on Mental Health- No Report

B. Commissioner Marshall gave a progress report regarding formation of a City Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

This update included detailed information on the history of a similar agency in LA County that was supported by Mayor

Garcetti and creatively funded and staffed.

C. Commissioner Jenkins updated the Commission on ongoing efforts to exonerate the Port Chicago Sailors. Commissioner

Caldera added that he was successful in setting up a meeting with Supervisor Cohen. Commissioner Caldera expressed

concern that City Attorney Snodgrass was not in attendance to answer legal questions regarding how independent

Commissions work together. President Noetzel suggested that Commissioner Caldera contact Mr. Snodgrass via email

for specific legal questions.

Agenda Item 6. Veterans Related LEGISLATION.

A. Commissioner Guy announced that Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act was passed today in the House of Representatives.

Agenda Item 7. WAR MEMORIAL VETERANS BUILDING

President Noetzel announced that litigation efforts were ongoing but not much new to report. Commissioner Caldera reminded

the Commission that the current litigation is not within the purview of the SFVAC. President Noetzel stated that the SFVAC is

committed to supporting the veteran's use and access to the building through legislative action or litigation support.

Agenda Item 8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Several Veteran related events were announced by Commissioners for the month of December. Description of events and event details will be posted on the website and social networking pages.

Agenda Item 9. Honors Report and Moment of Silence: In memory of American Armed Service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in all wars and conflicts, plus the passing of homeless veterans and veterans who died while waiting approval of benefits requests and suicides within the veterans and armed services community, including, this month, at the December 7th Pearl Harbor Anniversary, honoring the last four San Francisco Veterans to survive that tragic event, who passed away during the same two week period this November, namely, Robert V. GILLILAND, Pablo SILVA-RE, Ralph P. ANDERSON Jr., and Ralph TURNER.

Agenda Item 10. ADJOURNMENT

(At 6:55pm)

Minutes of the 12/9/14 VAC Meeting written by Secretary Dwane Kennedy.

and approved by unanimous vote at VAC meeting of January 13, 2015

